

The Abomination of Desolation (Synopsis) ©
(Restoring America via Educational Excellence)

The Public Education Establishment is failing a great nation. Though there are no easy answers, there are simple ones. In fact, there are just three *Cornerstones* that must be rightly settled. Moreover, we are identifying four *Methodologies* for accomplishing this indispensable mission. Be assured, if we rise to meet the need, America's brightest days will be ahead of us. In this good fight, there must be no fear or intimidation. This cause is Right and Good; it will always be Right and Good. So, there is only one acceptable outcome: Victory! *The Truth will set us free.*

Cornerstones

- 1.) We must again build on the transcendent principles specified in America's founding charter: *The Declaration of Independence*: America was never meant to be a secular nation; in fact, her existence *requires* an absolute Source higher than relative self-interest: *The Laws of Nature and Nature's God*, and more specifically, a *Creator*. Our public schools do not possess the authority to render this core understanding out-of-bounds nor create an atmosphere wherein such expressions are de facto forbidden. Rather, our public schools have a moral and intellectual duty to instill these *self-evident truths*, our cornerstones for *Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness*.
- 2.) We must again recognize the rightful educational overseers: Parents are the proper entity for determining the chief purposes and structures for the schools serving their greatest treasures. Parents are the Divinely-appointed trustees for raising children; this should be common sense. Americans once shared this elemental worldview regarding the best manner for yielding healthy families and communities... and a nation teeming with shining successes and enduring virtues.
- 3.) We must again remember that all *public* educational enterprises belong to *us*. We built them; we sustain them; and, their purpose is to serve *our* children, *our* families and *our* communities. *We the People, We the Taxpayers, We the Parents* cannot continue to *cede* the field; instead, we must *seize* it. American citizens have been blessed with the unique opportunity to be as Caesar! In "*rendering unto Caesar*," we will simply be assuming our God-given roles.

Methodologies

- 1.) We must garner accountability from our Representatives; they should be answering to *us*! The Congress of these United States must pass "*The Foundations of Liberty Act*" (attached), as this is the will of the super-majority of American citizens. Until the Congress passes this bill, our cities, counties and states are free to take independent action; this is how America is supposed to work. In fact, any school system is free to adopt this bill as an operational standard.
- 2.) We must support teachers, principals and administrators who embrace these understandings. They will be risking much in adopting these precepts; therefore, we must unequivocally shelter them, if and when they join *the good fight* to restore *America's Founding Principles*.
- 3.) We must create new, dynamic learning centers (private and charter enterprises) as living examples of educational excellence... schools brimming with insight, innovation and integrity.
- 4.) We must implement *Project American Life* programming from sea to shining sea... in school classrooms as well as in the original four-day residential format: *ProjectAmericanLife.com*

The Abomination of Desolation © (Treatise)
(Restoring America via Educational Excellence)

Recent testing by the *National Assessment of Educational Progress* reveals new nationwide lows throughout America's public education system. As a snapshot, the national reading proficiency among 8th graders is 31%. Math proficiency drops to 26%. New Mexico holds the rock bottom award with 18% in reading and 13% in math; however, no state should point fingers, as they all hover close to these stunning national averages. Even worse, these results only speak to academic competence. When we pull back to examine the total educational paradigm, the findings are even more disturbing. The statistics are downright grisly when we consider the declines within the actual lives of so many students: their non-existent critical thinking skills, their deteriorating mental health status, their debilitating emotional deficits, their palpable lack of life-skills, their waning general knowledge. Collectively, this national public enterprise has long been a colossal failure, even a moral disgrace. To top it off, America leads the world in educational spending. Really?! How can so much time, energy and resources be spent so poorly... in an endeavor of such utmost importance? An overwhelming majority of parents realize our education system is seriously flawed, though they may disagree about correctives.

As an educator, I have often pondered the fruitless pedagogical reforms and policy critiques that yielded only more despondency, confusion and division. For decades, I've watched myriads of *experts* launch verbal stones from the comforts of their partisan group think fortresses. Today, as an affected parent, I share the burden of citizens having been placed conveniently on the sidelines. Most parents are dismayed; many of us are disgusted; and yet as taxpayers, we are still picking up the tab for the entire undertaking. Though there may be a success story here or there, the public education establishment remains a barren wasteland... surrounded by barbed-wire fencing... under foreboding gray skies... acutely affecting over 90% of our young people for 13 long years! To those judging by results rather than grandiose intentions, the staggering costs in American lives and treasure is an absolute abomination. The chasm grows ever more wide; the trend line remains a bitter reminder; and worst of all, hope is fading within the American soul.

The prevailing realities can transport the most optimistic of minds into realms of cynicism. For many, attempts to engage have been profoundly frustrating... going from determined to defeated. Still, I cling to a core thesis: There are no easy answers, but there are simple ones. In fact, there are just three cornerstones that must be restored... all well within our grasp: We must build upon unshakable foundations; we must recognize the rightful overseers; we must remember citizens are Caesar in America. That is, there must be foundational clarity as well as empowerment of the essential entities. Though this essay will prove the *self-evident* nature of these matters, many will turn away reflexively, "*That's ridiculous; it can't be that simple!*" To this, I humbly ask, "*What if it really is this simple?*" After all, there's an inherent beauty in simplicity, allowing accessibility to everyone. Herein, I will identify the core problems, provide holistic solutions and offer renewed vision to weary Americans long ignored, forgotten and even abandoned. Please read before judging; I ask only for open public debate, rather than bigoted secret mockery.

In the prophecy of Daniel, there is causative understanding: Abomination yields Desolation; that is, deprivation follows the adoption of manmade gods (false renderings of the truth). Hebrew and Greek etymology of the phrase provides glimpses into the projected demise: Horrid filth and decay leaves viewers speechless; and yet, the ghastly descent has a most notable component. The fraudulent prescriptive is always given under the guise of helping and protecting. Does this technique sound familiar? It turns out that the wholesale disregard of Truth really is an Either/Or proposition. When truth is diminished, lies grow in turn. When the Source (God) is removed, the subsequent vacuum is filled by various demigods... replete with dedicated disciples who ultimately insist that everyone accept the authority of the new sovereigns. Soon, the once solid rock erodes all the way to shifting sands... "*lawlessness abounds and the love of many grows cold.*" The absolute is replaced by perception; the tangible is lost to the conjured. Today, America's prerequisites (*self-evident truths*) are officially out-of-bounds.

It is revealing that such individualistic claims have radically collective expressions, as in the postmodern understanding that people, conventions and institutions possessing power surely gained it by means of oppression; thus, the old order must be destroyed. And so, the vice of envy is now virtuous... and proponents see no irony in filling the power vacuum with themselves. Hanging by a thread is the Republic every American child once respected: *One Nation under God... Indivisible... with Liberty and Justice for All.* If this vision still resonates within our collective soul, we might ask, "*How much abomination can our nation bear before the desolation is irreversible?*" Though governmental, corporate and elitist factions continually throw proverbial chum in the water, we do not have to take the bait nor chase the lures that leave us continuously ensnared; we are not mindless fish. However, if we no longer embrace our Founding Principles, the term "*American*" loses its true meaning. Though we have become an amalgamation of *1984* and *Brave New World*, sufficient sobriety can help us decide whether ominous prophetic visions must be our destiny. If we do not address the present abomination, collapse is the next phase, inevitable and imminent. Such desolation is the history of the world.

How does one build a house without a blueprint to keep all workers accountable to the job? In seeking to build a new kind of nation, America's Founders drew up designs with coherent and cogent cornerstones. In life, there are preferences... opinions... theories... and then, there are truths that we must all share if chaos and carnage is to be avoided. There can be no abiding Right when there is no way to determine what is wrong. Moreover, without measurable metrics, we have no way to employ efficacious correctives when things go awry. And so, small errors lead to greater ones; the timeframe of disintegration is the lone unknown. Various adjustments may slow the train towards desolation, but only the return to the blueprint can alter the course. If we stop and think, we all know that life cannot be lived without core truths... enduring absolutes. Who would fly on an airplane crafted by engineers who did not employ a shared understanding of what constitutes an inch? Instead, each engineer determined length on the basis of personal feelings. Would even the most impassioned relativist ever step foot on the plane? Imagine a community wherein some consider murder just a personal preference, e.g., some choose a gluten-free diet, some choose murder. Would anyone choose to live there?

So, let us consider two frameworks of thought, the one we rejected and the one we now embrace. Modernism is the intellectual and cultural formation that emerged during the time we call the Enlightenment. Here were the fertile fields wherein the thoughts of America's Founders were born, shaped and continually refined. Reason and rationality revealed previously hidden truths about the universe, provided insights into human progress, and inspired ideas regarding inherent Rights in the context of human equality, market capitalism and personal freedom. In this climate, it is no surprise that Jefferson coined the phrase, "*Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of happiness.*" In sharp contrast, postmodernism (critical theory) arose during the last half of the 20th century offering skeptical critiques of past accomplishments in most every realm. Here, knowledge itself is always contextual; that is, there is no grand narrative about anything. Moreover, the relativist argument creates an inevitable link between claims of truth and social power; thus, *self-evident truths* are just tools of control used by oppressors. Not surprisingly, this prevailing worldview is rife with meaningless: no real truths, no real virtues, no real heroes.

In America today, who even remembers our Founding Principles? Who still boldly rises to proclaim our transcendent ideals? The Declaration once had the power to inspire hearts, minds and souls; it transformed the face of the world! How did it become inert, out-of-date, out-of-bounds... safely locked away in our National Archives Museum? The parchment remains well-protected; yet tragically, the truth upon it has been rejected. Did the truth change? Consider how the wholesale transformation of America has taken place... with hardly a whimper. Where were new generations of patriots like Patrick Henry, John Adams, Frederick Douglass, Susan B. Anthony or Martin Luther King? As those who first declare overarching truths are often castigated, persecuted and even murdered, could it be that we are now lacking in the virtue that gives substance to all the others: Courage? Are we still able to declare without fear or intimidation, "*Give me Liberty or give me death?!*" Can we still summon the strength to seize essential truths? Or, will we passively surrender our noble history? "*Forbid it, Almighty God!*"

Though the once vibrant vision of a *Shining City on a Hill* slips away before our eyes, few give pause. A profound sense of meaninglessness is generating a raging river of erosive side-effects; every honest person sees these downstream symptoms. Many parents have had their lives forever scarred by the horrors that have devastated the lives of their children. We are vividly experiencing the "desolation;" and yet, we are slow to recognize the "abomination." True, "abomination" is a strong word; and, "desolation" is an appallingly harsh consequence. However, when dying of thirst in the desert, how did the hope of an everlasting spring become offensive? As we ponder the deserts of our nation, can we still remember that this parched ground was once home to a resplendent garden? And yes, there was a Good Gardener known to everyone, at least in part. Like it or not, we are still dependent upon factors greater than ourselves. It turns out we are not gods after all; claiming to see, we became blind. As a people, we sat idly as *America's Founding Principles* were systematically dismantled. The fertile fields that once produced unprecedented magnificence and abundance were strangely abandoned. And today, many of our leaders choose autonomy in hell rather than admit to our organic dependence. Their political acolytes feign strength rather than accept innate weakness.

Imagine the requirements for growing a prosperous garden: As fertile ground is essential, the first task is determining if the soil is teeming with nutrients or if it is barren. Many throw up their hands declaring, “*Who can say; it’s all just dirt!*” But this is not true; a good gardener knows the difference. Through his lens of experience and applied reason, the answer surrounds him... decisive clues abound. And so, let us expand the thought: Is the desired educational farmland replete with healthy topsoil or polluted gravel? Are the principles for growing strong schools absolute or contrived? Do we measure success by the presence of abundant, prospering students? Are barren minds and a persistent scourge of social dysfunction now acceptable? Educational excellence is not an esoteric quest; we know the answers. Great reservoirs of cultivation skills and essential nutrients remain; these elements never left. Bountiful harvests of inspired and flourishing students are waiting... just like viable seeds long held in storage.

Alone in a Birmingham jail, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. believed *America’s Founding Principles* still held the answers; this faith fueled his pen. In 1776, a ragtag army of colonists rose up against overwhelming odds... for they believed their Great Cause was a blessed gift for all posterity. During World War II, Americans left the comforts of home to defeat fascism... for they believed such evil forces had to be overcome. During the Cold War, Americans stood united against false ideologies and applications... lies we had to challenge. In all of these cases, our Principles were right; the others were wrong. Truth is truth; lies are lies. As Americans, we have long believed in a transcendent standard; and thus, true patriots consider what *ought* to be... and stretch towards the life *meant* for everyone. The history of America has long overflowed with the righting of wrongs plaguing humanity. In this, our work has never just been the cold calculus of majority decisions. Rather, the moral requirements of the *Laws of Nature and Nature’s God require* that we defend and extend these *unalienable Rights of Life and Liberty*. This mission was unprecedented in the history of the world... for even the powerful surrendered their favored positions out of respect for the new moral code. Kings, and those who would be kings, were compelled to kneel at the feet of a higher Authority.

For some, this way of thinking seems odd. This is understandable since the unifying truths of old are no longer present; endless strife attests to this. Still, we can again come to the Either/Or and think anew; evidence demands verdicts. To be sure, the concept of universal principles is rife with dichotomy. The truths of the Declaration were not *self-evident* to the English Monarchy. Moreover, the facts of human history undermine such cursory notions... that is, if we define *self-evident* as meaning “patently obvious.” And so, what did the Founders mean by, “*We hold these truths to be self-evident?*” In the Declaration’s opening prologue, we find the defining article: “*a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires.*” The Founders stated the reasons they were declaring independence... breaking from old traditions and established ethnicities to establish a new kind of nation... one posited upon transcendent ideas. They believed the whole of humanity would eventually be able to recognize these principles... even those long unseen... *if and when*... they looked through the lens of reason with a heart of good will for others. And, our Founders believed such transformative foundations required a point of origin, even a “*Creator.*” In this, they were *either* right *or* wrong. Today, we must decide.

We must give a clarion answer to this vital Either/Or. In recent decades, we did precisely this; we set aside any Authority greater than us. Do we have the courage to admit it? As a nation, we nonchalantly turned our backs on our collective Standard. We passively accepted the notion that our Founders were dry objectivists, stoic deists, even atheists... despite the exhaustive historical accounts of these men. Beyond these archives, mechanistic mentalities could never have written a visionary masterpiece like the Declaration. Of the 56 Signers, almost all identified as Christians; over half had studied divinity at the university level. The least religious (Benjamin Franklin) insisted that delegates be guided by prayer at the Constitutional Convention. And so, the known facts beg the most piercing question: *“How did we come to the ridiculously false paradigm that now prevails?”* Can we summon the honesty and/or humility to acknowledge that we collectively took wrong turns along the way... knowingly or unknowingly? We once understood that *“pride goeth before the fall.”* Now, we celebrate *“Pride;”* it even has an entire month dedicated to it. Did you vote for this? Are you celebrating? If so, what exactly?

We once knew there was a way to stand, even when we fell: Reject pride; embrace the truth! The strong foundations so desperately needed today will never rise from the realms of Google, Twitter, the University or the halls of government. And more, the cognitive and moral wellbeing of our nation’s students will not flow profusely from any Department of Education, Office of the Superintendent or the *National Education Association*. And yet, there is good news: America’s history remains radiantly efficacious, instructive and even heartening. Our *Revolution of 1776* had an intrinsic moral core... teeming with monumental philosophical and structural dimensions. Though recent generations have been starved on a radically deficient diet, wholesome and nutritious *bread* remains! To be sure, applied *wisdom* can take time to become the shared reality of the larger society, as in the gradual implementation of essential *Liberty*. Herein, the truth did not need to change; the understanding of the citizenry required modification. Even in scientific endeavor, there are ongoing struggles towards grasping the truth... in astronomy, physics, medicine... everything. Today, *we the people* find ourselves no longer sharing an understanding of what constitutes “the good life,” “the common good” or even the meaning of the word “good.”

Roughly half of America believes abortion to be a Constitutional right; the other half believes it to be the deliberate destruction of human life. Which is it? Roughly half of America believes criminals choose wrongly in committing evil acts; the other half believes criminals are victims of various injustices; therefore, they should not be held fully accountable for their wrong choices. Which half is right? Roughly half of America believes government has the authority to inject citizens with substances they do not want or need; the other half believes that each human being possesses *unalienable Rights* that must not be transgressed by any worldly authority. Which position is correct? In America today, we can no longer even agree as to who is a boy and who is a girl. Some believe there are two genders; some believe there are several; some believe there are hundreds. As a matter of public policy, can they all be correct? Somehow, we must restore shared foundations upon which everyone can stand. Yes, we must have common standards, sure and true; that is, if we still desire to be one nation. May we remember: It is the presence of Truth that provides broken humanity the strength and resolve to stand in this fallen world.

Yes, there was a time when *self-evident truths* protected the *unalienable rights* of everyone. We had a worldview that could transcend the moral challenges before us. All we needed was a little more light... a little more thought... and a little more courage. And in time, the truth would ultimately set everyone free. As the new religion of postmodernism now reigns supreme, what are the measurable outcomes? Each day, we are harvesting evermore individual and social dysfunction, e.g., chaos, drugs, promiscuity, violence, even suicide. Though absolute links cannot be proven, coherence demands that we acknowledge the most effective agent in instilling postmodernism: public education. This should not be a surprise; it has over 90% of the children at least seven hours a day for thirteen years. Alongside its abandonment of modernist morality, some schools do not have a single student reading and writing at grade level. To this, we have the incessant chatter of “reform” from educators, politicians and talking heads, even though their proud prescriptions never demonstrate discernible improvements. It is important to remember that our schools were not always this way. America was once the envy of the world when it came to educating children within our blessed cauldron of *Liberty*. So, what changed?

Some may wish to research the Frankfurt School (Marxist developers of critical theory); beyond this, a proper understanding of the historical intricacies requires in-depth study. For now, I will just paint a picture of the Godlessness which now pervades our world. Tonight, we might walk outside to behold the magnificence of a sunset. As our minds overflow with majestic visions, we might believe such sublime experiences are leading us towards special revelations. However, “critical theory” is able to cancel these metaphorical understandings, as these vivid encounters are mere delusions... side-effects of star reflections in a random planet’s atmosphere. How silly to make attachments to feelings of wonderment and peace; humans can be so naive. Critical theory changes the cognitive lens; adherents miss the pure beauty of the sunset. After all, such attractions are just “*in the eye of the beholder.*” Ironically, critical theory has its own absolute: There are no absolutes. Yes, this is quite the conundrum. Though a trifle of thought could reveal manifold absurdities, there are also staggering and immeasurable losses: The *Creator* has been excised from all equations; there is no longer an abiding Standard for beauty, truth, right, good... anything. In fact, history itself has been whitewashed of any vestiges of moral reasoning. Within these new and barren landscapes, heroic visions can only fade; they even die.

It’s no wonder parents find themselves wholly demoralized. Being continually marginalized, chastised and dismissed can do this to people. Here, we must be explicit: These sinister results are by design! And yet, teachers and principals are not the architects of such evil blueprints. In fact, many of them are valiantly serving on the front lines, amidst the twisted structures surrounding them. They did not fashion secular creeds nor write revisionist curricula nor abolish the old standards nor implement the new requirements. Actually, many are *heroes* in the purest sense of the word. They work diligently... with grace and devotion... seeking to inspire and empower their students. And yet, Michelangelo would be severely handicapped in the painting of masterpieces if he only had access to the prescribed colors. What if the primary ones were not allowed on his palette? It’s hard to spark the innate sense of wonder and awe when the Source is *de facto* verboten. Relative virtues can never be genuinely inspiring because true virtue is not relative. *Truth, Beauty, Goodness, Love...* these reflect the qualities of their Source, the *Creator*.

Of course, some “educators” relish postmodernism and the radically secularized agenda; it’s their calling. Regardless, all school officials are placed on the same tracks... headed for the same stations. They are not the locomotives; they are the various cars being pulled down the tracks. Worst of all, parents are conveniently placed in the caboose... if allowed to be present at all. When there is no Standard Giver, there is no enduring basis for *rights, equality, or rule of law*; these terms are reduced to rhetorical flourishes without meaning. The decline of American greatness is directly linked to disconnecting citizens from their nation’s glorious past and transcendent foundations. So, let us reason together: Did starting the school day with reverence and reflection constitute a shamanistic ceremony, bathing students in sectarian energies? Clearly, no. Did such prayer impose hardships upon anyone? Again, no. Was anyone coerced into adopting a religion-specific orthodoxy? Obviously, no. Were students forced to participate in this longstanding tradition. Of course not! Instead, this brief moment in time only gave pause for a larger sense of perspective... perhaps of a world with meaning and purpose... where bits of knowledge connect with a larger meta-narrative. These are the absolute facts; this was the American Way; we had it right! And yet, in today’s parlance, making such statements to educational elites only generates chuckles of condescension... and later, deceitful vengeance.

With so much proverbial blood in the water, the raging sharks only became more vicious in their assault upon all that is Good and Right about *America’s Founding Principles*. The “abomination of desolation” was underway... devastating yet unchallenged. The powers-that-be just rolled their eyes at all objections, as none were worthy of discussion. Determined dogmatists are entitled to their opinions, but citizens do not have to obediently bow to their decrees. I offer a salient thought for examination: *What exactly was so offensive about prayer in school? What kinds of indoctrinations were taking place... so vile they had to be expunged from every public school in America?* I’m going to provide the text of the prayer that started the nationwide tidal wave; let the reader decide. As one might expect, the wholesale transformation originated in a legal case wherein a group of attorneys in long black robes deemed certain kinds of expression completely out-of-bounds... a torturous scourge upon the minds of our youngest citizens.

In 1962, the Supreme Court ruled in the case of *Engel vs. Vitale* that prayer in public schools was a violation of the establishment clause of the *First Amendment*. As this amendment refers to the “establishment” of a “religion,” clarity and coherence demand that we know exactly how a “religion” was “established” in the short prayer chosen by the *New York Board of Regents*? It must have been quite the evangelistic and oppressive piece of prose! Here is the exact text: *“Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, and we beg Thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers and our Country.”* That’s it. These are the salacious words that required students from sea to shining sea to disregard their old ways of thinking. Upon this ruling, all public schools were required to banish vital realms of expression, reflection and peace. The most well-studied legal scholars in the world could not see what was right in front of their eyes. Claiming to see, they ordained blindness. In their arrogant dismissal of the actual text and *self-evident* meaning of *The Constitution*, the Supreme Court (and subsequent lower courts) cursed the lives of generations of Americans in employing a totally false premise.

As we find our nation on the precipice, now is a good time to reconsider past renderings: What “religion” was formed by the reverent reflection? Not only is there no “establishment” of a “religion;” one is not even identified. In fact, most major religions would claim the prayer as their own. Instead of the tedious demagoguery fashioned by the Supreme Court, the offending article is actually found in the first two words: “Almighty God.” T.S. Eliot cautions us, “*If you will not have God... you should pay your respects to Hitler or Stalin.*” When the foundation is removed, something always rushes in to fill the void. And so, those who could not bear a Power greater than themselves succeeded in undermining America’s moral bedrock... nationwide. Of course, they did not rid us of a higher power upon whom we are all accountable; rather, these ruling elites just assumed the roles. Following precedent and receiving little or no push back, the education bureaucracy continued to eradicate any and all notions of Providential Wisdom and Authority from the hearts and minds of their students... our children. And today, the same forces are coming for the Divinely-appointed authorities in such matters: Parents. We must not be deceived; they really do think they know best. They’re the experts; parents are just breeders.

History informs us loudly and decisively... these are always the first techniques employed by tyrants. Though their political agendas may vary... Hitler, Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot, Castro and Kim Jong-un all hate the authority of both God and parents. And, these enforcers play to win; they’ll employ whatever ruthlessness is required. From Communism’s beginnings, Marx declared, “*The education of all children from the moment that they can get along without their mother’s care, shall be in state institutions at state expense.*” Lenin clarified, “*Give me four years to teach the children and the seed I have sown will never be uprooted.*” But even these do not quite equal the refreshingly honest thoughts of Charles Potter, “*Education is thus a most powerful ally of humanism, and every American school is a school of humanism. What can a theistic Sunday School’s meeting for an hour once a week and teaching only a fraction of the children do to stem the tide of the five-day program of humanistic teaching?*” In and through their icons of postmodernism (Engels, Dewey, Sangor, Marcuse, Freire, Foucault, Derrida, Feyerabend, Chomsky to the present Richard Dawkins), our schools have been the vanguard of this secular revolution. The rest is but a sordid legacy of ignorance, apathy and cowardice.

As some may doubt the veracity of this claim, allow me to ask a basic question: Who can name a single public middle or high school wherein the *Laws of Nature and Nature’s God* (or simply the *Creator*) are bedrock standards of morality and wherein parents are integral factors in the various vicissitudes of school life, e.g., curriculum options, academic standards, philosophical frameworks, or just being a part of the school day? I dare to state openly that not a single one can be named... for not a single one exists. Just as in the matter of school prayer, the will of parents has been casually brushed aside as an unnecessary burden. We’re told that the matter is “settled.” And so, citizens reflexively bow, even though open and honest examination of the available facts has not occurred. When there is disagreement on an issue, it is the parents who must learn the new tricks... like dogs in obedience school. If parents have the effrontery to question school policy, they can be painted as hyper-sensitive and/or uneducated. If they rise up in protest, they can be deemed domestic terrorists... meriting investigations at the federal level.

In a classic Andy Griffith episode (*Opie's Hobo Friend*), Andy has to confront the dishonest manipulations of a drifter who has wandered into Mayberry. Using wit and charm, the hobo persuades Opie to embrace ideas he had previously known to be wrong, e.g., not telling the truth, not honoring his dad, going fishing instead of doing chores, and even stealing. Though Andy was initially tolerant of the hobo, he begins to realize that Opie's worldview is being re-shaped by the wily visitor. In the end, the hobo asks Andy, "*Who's to say that the boy would be happier your way or mine? Why not let him decide?*" Andy, using the metaphor of a fishing lure, earnestly replies, "*No, I'm afraid it don't work that way. You can't let a young'un decide for himself. He'll grab at the first flashy thing with shiny ribbons on it. Then when he finds out there's a hook in it, it's too late. Wrong ideas come packaged with so much glitter, it's hard to convince him that other things might be better in the long run. All a parent can do is say, 'Wait. Trust me,' and try to keep temptation away.*"

The truth is indeed timeless, as this Mayberry experience captures the present relationship between the ruling class (the educational bureaucracy) and the citizenry (the parents). The school delivers a secular worldview of personal fulfillment and individual autonomy which ironically becomes the rigid formation aptly described as "group think." Some of *Andy Griffith's* appeal is found in recognizing what we know as time... is actually time and Eternal Time... at the same time! That is, seemingly ordinary day-to-day experiences are directly related to far greater understandings. Sheriff Andy helps us see glimpses of a world beyond the present shadows; we enjoy the warmth and beauty of a loving community in an ocean of Southern simplicities. *The Andy Griffith Show* began airing the same time school prayer was ruled "unconstitutional" by the Supreme Court. Not surprisingly, there are far greater challenges presently confronting us: Consider the effect one lone hobo had upon Opie... even within Mayberry's grand sea of God-centered thinking and a wealth of parental and community support. How can today's children triumph over the overarching and pernicious powers-that-be? Yes, the prevailing culture places prodigious challenges upon parents. If *only* there were just hobos...

Instead of unifying rituals like prayer, we have the manifest corruption of the internet and the comprehensive manipulations flowing from the media, Hollywood, retailers... everywhere. We might ask ourselves, "*Where can I take my child to receive a wholesome experience?*" Something so simple has become something so vexing. The avalanche of overt lies and subtle distortions have shaped youth culture... totally separate and antithetical to the desires of parents. Of course, our schools could be a great asset in helping us rightly equip and empower our children. To be fair, many schools are doing their best in this regard, particularly at the elementary level. But even the most well-staffed and best-intentioned schools cannot adequately offer refuge and strength without the Source able to provide abiding refuge and strength. Postmodern virtues are hollow; they may look good on the outside, but strangely missing is the inner substance the real world requires. Taking away a child's God and his or her parents is no trivial matter. Of course, parents still have roles; they are the ones who must deal with the outcomes... like removing the shiny lures that have left their children ensnared... or worse.

The reader may now be thinking that I have a child being poorly served in an inner-city school. Or, I'm a conservative parent whose child is in a very liberal school... being subjected to a plethora of ideas of which I am morally opposed. Or, my child attends a poor rural school that is lacking many essential resources. All of these would be thoughtful assumptions; but actually, my children attend schools that are rated among the best in the country. I live in a very red state; our schools will not make the news with overt points of contention. In fact, our classrooms probably instill traditional American moral values as well as any school in the country. However, visitors could spend several days observing classes and activities and still not know what state they were in. They might assume the school was in an affluent area, but only the well-versed in nuance would have a clue whether they were in Massachusetts or Alabama. This should not be surprising. Teachers and administrators must fit the homogenous molds of the credentialing institutions of higher education... swarming with legions of status-quo advocates and vanguards of secular postmodernism. Who exactly made these molds? And more, why did we let them?

Despite my own children's advantaged public education offerings, we have had several vivid experiences since the advent of school. One stands out as the quintessential example of structural bias and indoctrination. For reasons beyond normal realms of comprehension, my oldest child's elementary teacher introduced her students to the un-scientific theory regarding the origins of life: the standard fare C.H.O.N. model of the primordial pool (Carbon, Hydrogen, Oxygen, and Nitrogen). Of course, it is never explained as to where these elements originated; and yet, they were randomly and magically animated by outside forces (artists usually depict lightening). Astonishingly, these actions created microorganisms (though this can never be replicated even in the most controlled environments). Then, these small life forms evolved over million of years... forming ever more complex creatures... and ultimately us. Wow, that's quite a tale. I can only imagine my child trying to make sense of this new version of her existence.

As it did not compute in her mind, she raised her hand and added her two cents, *"I think God created animals like butterflies, lambs, and puppies and the devil created things like mosquitos, rattlesnakes, and sharks."* Now, one would think that a "teacher" would respond with something like, *"Well... that's very interesting, Eliana; maybe that's what happened. Your thinking is certainly creative. Thank you for sharing."* My daughter certainly thought she had given an excellent answer... and was expecting to receive a warm smile, and even encouraging praise. Instead, her innocent spirit was crushed. The "teacher" anxiously and hastily responded, *"Eliana, you can talk about that kind of thing after school."* First of all, is this approach now considered teaching? Secondly, how should a parent feel about this? And more, what should they do? What shall we call having to pay high taxes to stifle the earnest imagination and free spirit of a child? When I picked Eliana up at the door, she immediately told me the story, as if she has learned an important lesson. *"Daddy, I learned that I should only talk about God after school."* Upon getting the complete account on the way to the car (which she thought was a lesson learned), we turned around for a visit with the principal. He knew this should have been handled much differently though he believed the teacher was only trying to avoid controversy. But this only begs the question, *"What did my child say that caused such interior angst within the teacher? Why does everyone feel forced to walk around on proverbial eggshells?"*

The principal said that some parents desire more religious instruction. To this, I could only reply, “*I’m not seeking any religious instruction.*” Seemingly confused, he warmly inquired, “*What then are you seeking?*” My answer was just one word... a word that used to resonate within the souls of all Americans: “*Freedom!*” When he asked me to explain, thoughts instantly sprung forth, “*My child deserves the same freedom of Conscience and expression as any other child. Today, I paid to have my child’s most sacred foundations undermined... and to have her innocent spirit profoundly injured. She was not free to speak like an atheistic child. And more, secular parents had their worldview presented by the teacher! This is a caste system; some are more equal than others.*” And yet, in this case, there is an odd wrinkle: The super-minority is dictating to the majority... with no account to reason or foundational coherency. I remind the reader, this happened in one of the best schools in the country... serving a population of largely conservative Christians. This happened in a school run by a principal who is second to none nationwide. This travesty happened here; how often does it happen all across America?

Today, all public schools are governed by the directives of the Supreme Court ruling of 1962 as well as subsequent legal rulings using this precedent as the defining article. There are always the temptations not to swim against the current; after all, one’s days and even careers are made far better by following the mantra, “*Go along to get along.*” Within the court system and throughout the higher spheres of education, the best seats go to the team players. Non-conformists go by other names... like “unaccepted” to the university and “unemployable” to the legal and educational systems. Consider, if a public educational institution introduces verboten topics or invites verboten speakers, there will be immediate protests and threats of legal action. The new sovereigns demand absolute conformity; in fact, many topics and speakers are never even considered. On the local level, what teacher or principal wants to absorb more poisoned arrows into his or her back? Their responsibility list is already overwhelming; they do not need further headaches nor do they want to derail their opportunities for advancement. To be sure, punishments are routinely delivered to any and all heretics. Using techniques that would make the *Grand Inquisitor* blush, interrogations are suitable for those who question the orthodoxy.

The past century has put America’s children in the crosshairs of a cultural revolution... against little or no resistance. Traditionalists assumed the proverbial pendulum would swing back to a comfortable normal; they were wrong. And now, many believe America herself is irreparable. To be clear, apathy and cynicism are serious deviations from our noblest traditions; we do not opt to surrender when the going gets tough. We can remember: Judicial precedent is not sacrosanct; earlier renderings can be completely wrong, as in *Plessy vs. Ferguson*. It took *Brown vs. the Board of Education* to expose the fallacy of the once well-established decision. The presence of greater light revealed a core truth that had long been hidden. Of course, this is the nature of all human discovery. Since the advent of ultrasound technology, many have gained clarity regarding the new life in the womb... seeing the animated little baby moving right before their eyes. People still choose different paths, but sufficient light does not allow the inherent laziness in insisting reality is nebulous and unknowable. Thankfully, the great minds of science were not hindered by sloth and indifference to what was just beyond the veil: the Truth.

There has always been a clash between right and wrong. Today, the “traditional” understandings of the super-majority of the citizens is at odds with the “progressive” enlightenment of *experts*. For many decades, these elites have prevailed in the ongoing cultural war; however, just as in the case of *Brown*, the truth remains unchanging and ever-present. Sure, I have my own worldview (like every other thinking person); however, if I could choose, I would have my children with students from many religious and/or philosophical backgrounds... with every child having the freedom to think and speak from perspectives harmonizing with their traditions. This is not my novel idea; it is the American story. We are all endowed with the *Right of Liberty* through the hands of our *Creator!* Each generation has been charged to preserve this brilliant vision and everlasting blessing as our national modus operandi: *E Pluribus Unum*, Out of many, one! Without a scintilla of doubt, we as a nation are failing miserably in our moral duties. Without a trace of ambiguity, our nation’s schools are geared to serve the desires of the coldest of atheists. In American schools today, the worldview of our Founders is no longer welcome.

Strangest of all, the worldview of our Founders is still shared by the overwhelming majority of Americans; in some states, it’s nearly universal. We believe things collapse when God’s Principles are eclipsed and abandoned by outside forces. We believe the birth of a child is a gift from God, just as Isaac was given to Abraham and Sarah. We believe God’s gifts come with inherent responsibilities... like bringing up children in *the nurture and admonition of the Lord*. We believe these moral duties can be spread to extended family groups as well as the greater community; however, we believe parents are the ones authorized to make the ultimate decisions. (To be clear, physicians may possess more biological data regarding our children’s health; however, this does not alter operational authority, nor does it imply doctors know our children better than we do.) Lastly, we believe we are endowed with the *Rights to Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of happiness*; and, we believe these *Rights* extend to everyone! Here’s the irony: We, the super-majority, are the ones who have long been open-minded, perhaps too much so. In acquiescing to secular radicals, we allowed our own children to be indoctrinated; we permitted our nation’s moral foundations to be eroded. In this, we have long been wrong; now is the time to be right! So, let us begin again. As always, the Truth will set us free.

How did we forget what we once well knew; how did we lose what we once held firmly? The wholesale transformation is not a mystery: Remember when you were asked if you wanted a secular worldview instilled within your child? Of course not! Do you remember yearning to have the government take over the role of raising your children? No, that would be insane! As an American citizen, do you remember voting for any of these radical changes over the past 60 years? No, this never happened. So, what happened to the Constitutional “*consent of the governed?*” It is *self-evident* the will of the citizenry has not been operational. Instead, the gargantuan educational monopoly has been shaped by governmental fiat, judicial overreach and bureaucratic ascendancy, one might say “systemically.” As generations of pitifully served students now constitute the majority, many of us just politely accept the propaganda and tyranny. It’s all we’ve ever known. And like a satiric sketch from *Monty Python*, our ruling class has the audacity to lecture us about the primacy of “democracy.” Please, it’s beyond absurd.

One does not have to look far or long to see what encircles the youth of our nation: Confusion, Anxiety, Depression, Rebellion and the downward spiral of horrific symptoms. Yes, I am stating directly, without mumbling: Public education is complicit, knowingly or unknowingly, in the systematic destruction of the kind of life all loving parents desire for their children... the Good Life our *Creator* offers freely. And yes, as this charge is startling and sobering, it surely merits impassioned rejoinders. So, will the educational establishment engage with me? If not, why not? If the prevailing authorities were correct, they would want to present their arguments in the open air of dialogue and discussion... where the facts of their position could be made clear and where the fallacies of their opposition could be exposed. But this is clearly not the case. In fact, great effort is expended to avoid, even prevent, such analysis. Remember, the best tools of postmodernism are ignorance and apathy... the acceptance of rules without the demands of truth. The best propagandists gain adherents by removing the natural inclination to question... to gather followers who never know they're being led. Conversely, truth-tellers want people to contemplate, even debate, all facets of every question. Their confidence is in the truth.

I wonder, “*Do we still walk down wooded trails to free our minds and ponder life’s meaning?*” If so, we might ask some simple questions along the path, “*How did things go so wrong? What forces created such an avalanche of mangled structures in our world? Who is orchestrating such a dark symphony?*” People can be clueless about many things, but ignorance generally breeds a cornucopia of failures, not well-honed, highly-coordinated and enduring successes. The hubris and swagger of the bureaucracy aligned against us is finally awakening the *still, small voice* in our souls. Bob Dylan speaks of his experience in *Precious Angel* from *Slow Train Coming* ©:

*Now there’s spiritual warfare and flesh and blood breaking down
Ya either got faith or ya got unbelief and there ain’t neutral ground
The enemy is subtle, how be it we are so deceived
When the truth’s in our hearts and we still don’t believe?*

We must ask, “*What is the source-point for vision, passion and commitment?*” For America’s Founders, it was their *Creator*. As this is clearly not the case today, what fuels the controlling entities? If people truly believed in nothing, why would they so fervently seek to remove what others hold dear? One could suggest the age-old vices of jealousy or the lust for power (and these are surely in play). But these alone do not adequately explain the dark nature of such pursuits or subsequent vile acts. As a teenager in the Nazi camps of *Auschwitz* and *Buchenwald*, Elie Wiesel witnessed the previously unthinkable, “*Infants were tossed up in the air and used as the targets for machine guns.*” Who can explain this, particularly to the families of the victims? Still, we must not walk away from the question! Elie later expressed a lifetime of consideration upon this matter: “*Indifference, to me, is the epitome of evil. The opposite of love is not hate, it’s indifference. The opposite of art is not ugliness, it’s indifference. The opposite of faith is not heresy, it’s indifference. And the opposite of life is not death, it’s indifference.*” Alas, America’s decay is not just the product of a few committed atheists. If only this were the case.

In the seventies, comedian Flip Wilson made popular the saying, *“The devil made me do it.”* Not only was he uniquely funny, he also made rightful mockery of those incessantly blaming someone else for their own choices. This being said, there are forces (internal and external) that act upon us all. We experience both good and bad; and then, each of us is free to choose our subsequent actions. The grotesque, torturous murders at the hands of Charles Manson’s disciples stunned a nation and compelled many to seek deeper answers regarding the presence of evil. Of course, the events of 9/11 caused many of us to do likewise. How could we explain such vile actions? “Satan” comes from a Hebrew word meaning adversary; Greek etymology of “the devil” reflects Jesus’ characterization of the evil one: “a liar.” Again, in the spirit of Daniel’s prophecy, there is misdirection: Early Christians believed demons camouflaged themselves; Satan himself could transform into an angel of light. In Judaism’s archetypal first story, a perfect garden collapses because of deception... the temptings of a wily serpent. For Muslims, the same kind of renderings are found in the Quran: *“The Evil One made their deeds alluring to them, and kept them back from the Path, though they were gifted with intelligence and skill.”*

I hear the antagonists, *“Are you suggesting that the bureaucratic machinations of the educational establishment compare with the Holocaust, Charles Manson, and the horrors of 9/11?”* On the surface level, the answer is emphatically, *“Of course not; such comparisons would be shameful.”* However, before we dismiss any and all association with devilish manifestations of ancient evil, what shall we call the obsession with separating children from their Maker? How can we aptly describe the stripping away of essential meaning and purpose from their lives? Why would such energy be expended towards the removal of an enduring groundswell of peace, hope and joy in the lives of young people (not to mention the promise of Everlasting Life)? Lastly, what do we make of the systemic work of alienating children from their parents... those who love them most? The present educational deficiencies do not mirror the manifest horrors and graphic cruelties of mankind’s legacy of atrocities. Nonetheless, the sheer magnitude of the losses (and the suffering therein) is astounding. Evil can construct gas chambers; it can also decimate the greatest nation in history. If there really is “a deceiver,” it surely laughs maniacally these days.

Each day, deceivers employ avoidance when possible... straw-man or ad-hominem arguments if they’re trapped in a rhetorical corner. This is understandable since they lack facts, foundations and integrated applications. If the citizenry takes some time to consider, they will recognize the dynamic power that is still in our hands. Will we have the eyes to see... the minds to discern... and the hearts to rise? For those who have been watching from the sidelines, some realities are so ominous it’s only natural to look away. Still, parents unwilling to engage and challenge the prevailing system are also complicit in the travesty before us. For these educational enterprises are *ours!* We built them; we sustain them; their purpose is to serve *our* children, *our* families and *our* communities. As a shared starting point, parents must become informed... and begin seeing the existing enterprise as it is. *We the People, We the Taxpayers, We the Parents* cannot continue to *cede* the field; instead, we must *seize* it! As American citizens, we have been blessed with the unique opportunity to be as Caesar... for we have ultimate authority in this new kind of nation. In *“rendering unto Caesar,”* we must simply assume our God-given roles.

Like few who have walked this earth, Elie Wiesel knew the face of evil; and yet, he never stopped believing there was hope for humanity, regardless of the situation. In fact, he believed that just one person of integrity could make a profound difference in the lives of others. Similarly, Thomas Jefferson believed public education could better society by creating an enlightened populace: “*To give to every citizen the information he needs for the transaction of his own business; To enable him to calculate for himself, and to express and preserve his ideas, his contracts and accounts, in writing; To improve, by reading, his morals and faculties; To understand his duties to his neighbors and country, and to discharge with competence the functions confided to him by either.*” So, whose understandings will we choose, the author of the Declaration or the educational elites of today? Of note, Jefferson is now known primarily as a barbaric villain because of his then culturally normative position of owning slaves. Was his position correct? Of course not. Was it hypocritical for him to have slaves? Of course. And yet, this matter begs an interesting question: How is it that Americans know slavery is wrong (though it’s still prevalent worldwide)? When asked how they know, people oft-quote the Declaration to make their point, “*All men are Created equal.*” It’s rather ironic, isn’t it?

Thomas Jefferson was not lacking intellectual precision or perspective; he knew that slavery conflicted with the Declaration’s principles. He lamented it; he wrote extensively about it; he even set out to abolish slavery in his first draft of the Declaration (key states rejected this provision). To thinking minds, the needed answers were tedious: How does a society make the needed transitions, e.g., What will former slaves do? Where will they live? How could the Union include states with such strong financial rationales for not ending the institution? Of course, this matter ultimately brought forth a devastating civil war nearly a century later. Regardless of all else, Thomas Jefferson had the clarity and courage to pen what was Eternally Right and Good, even though he knew it would someday heap condemnation upon himself. How many people are willing to do this? In stark contrast, postmodernists strive to embrace the “appropriate” public positions. Rather than arrogantly judging the past by present standards, they should examine their own cognitive dissonance.

Today, we must choose: The everlasting magnificence of our *Revolution of 1776* or the unrelenting horrors of the *Communist Revolution*. Today, there is no time for symbolic or Pyrrhic successes. Will we stay silent, even though all notions of a Higher Power (*Creator*) have been excised from the schools we fund? Will we stay silent, even though parents are being categorically dismissed from the entire enterprise? Will we stay on the sidelines until radical secularism ravages the lives of our children beyond remedy? To the great dismay of the societal conditioners, a few pesky parents are finally refusing to accept the depraved agenda. They realize we are at a pivotal crossroads... the most crucial Either/Or is at hand. We can seize and restore *America’s Founding Principles*; and in turn, our schools can yield generations of enlightened and prosperous citizens. Or, we can all slouch away, leaving students to fend for themselves within the daily postmodern indoctrinations and the grand finale of meaninglessness. As we near the abyss, the ultimate outcomes range from a *Shining City on a Hill* to a most uncivil war. As it was at Yorktown, victory is the only antidote to reviving weary souls and allowing freedom to resoundingly ring!

It was the higher sense of direction and purpose that birthed and sustained the *Spirit of 1776*. The whole experiment was posited upon the *self-evident truths* and *unalienable* endowments of our *Creator*. When our faculties are clear, we well remember what has been missing... a plane of existence where the fields are vibrant green... far beyond these shadowlands. We remember that parents were endowed with the role of raising future generations. Our *Creator* planted within them the deepest love for their children along with the endless dedication to their well-being. No state, no school, no outside entity should ever cast this asunder or weaken these bonds in any way. And if they do, *We the Parents* must restore the proper understanding. In this, there is no need for even a trace of fear or intimidation. Our cause is Right; it will always be Right. Like America's Founders, may we follow the path of Grace and Truth that waits for each of us. May we answer the call to be salt and light in an often flavorless and dark world... preserving and illumining the Good.

*In the time of my confession, in the hour of my deepest need
When the pool of tears beneath my feet flood every newborn seed
There's a dyin' voice within me reaching out somewhere
Toiling in the danger and in the morals of despair
Don't have the inclination to look back on any mistake
Like Cain, I now behold this chain of events that I must break
In the fury of the moment I can see the Master's hand
In every leaf that trembles, in every grain of sand
-Bob Dylan, Every Grain of Sand ©*

Our nation's children must again possess the *Liberty* to employ the language, embody the worldview, and amplify the dreams of America's Founders. Terminology such as *Creator*, *Nature's God* and *Divine Providence* should be spoken with the same level of comfort as *Mother Nature*, *Father Time* and *Darwinian Evolution*. Imagine American students being a bright light to the world. Imagine young people reaching for life's highest aspirations, embodying integrity and dedicating themselves to service to their neighbors, their communities and their great nation. Imagine excellence! Imagine success! Imagine the rebirth of the *American Dream!*

Can we still feel Dr. King's dream? "*I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together... With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood... This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning: My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of Liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrims' pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring!*" On this bright new day, we are not powerless; we need not be demoralized any longer. May we rejoin the *Great Cause* of building that long envisioned *City on a Hill*... set aglow by enlightened minds, impassioned hearts, expansive souls and prospering lives!

If we intend to avoid the *Abomination of Desolation*, one absolute fact must continually be kept front and center: The entire public education enterprise is 100% funded by “the forgotten man,” *We the People*. Though many educational elites do not presently understand the relationship of the parties, it is high time they receive a proper “education.” We need not be hindered nor distracted. On this day, parents can shape the destiny of their children... and America herself. *The Laws of Nature and Nature’s God* have placed the matter in our hands. Let us remember: We are not the lowly subjects of any human being; we have been wondrously *Created*... endowed with the *unalienable Right of Liberty*. We are *Americans!*

May we now rise with unrelenting passion; may we again speak with clarity and precision; may we engage with conviction and courage. And, if the days ahead are difficult, may we be renewed in the Truth: We are never alone in *the good fight!* May today be the day of salvation.

In God we Trust,

Jamie Aiken

Founder, *Project American Life (PAL)*

(205) 515-3000

ProjectAmericanLife.com

At the end of each *PAL* week, students sign their names to a large parchment copy of the following document. Week after week... year after year... countless teachers and administrators have witnessed the miraculous power of the still *self-evident truths*. Young Americans boldly sign, as tears of joy and gratitude flow freely. Not even John Hancock signed with more passion than these. Yes, there are abundant reasons to believe our best days are still ahead of us:

The Declaration of Dependence ©

On July 4, 1776, our nation’s Founders gave us the priceless gift of The Declaration of Independence: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” We have heard these words before but have never understood their full meaning. These words uncovered a truth that had always been available, but no society had ever completely comprehended. The world has never been the same.

Our nation will never be perfect as it can only be made up of imperfect people. Thankfully, The Declaration remains a renewing wellspring of strength and inspiration. In a world that has known so much darkness, America has been a brilliant beacon of light. We have certainly had more than our share of heroes to guide us. Today, we choose to join this “shining city on a hill” that we might continue to declare these founding principles. Though many say that these ideals are merely matters of personal opinion, we resoundingly reject this cowardly notion. These truths are still self-evident to all who are willing to see!

Today, there is much in the world to make us feel hopeless and helpless: fear, ignorance, apathy, and a profound sense of meaninglessness. Today, we must choose, and our choice is clear; we will seize the timeless standard of The Declaration. Right now, we recognize the precious gifts we were given. We honor those who lived and even died for these principles. We reflect upon who our forefathers were so we can best become who we really are. We yearn to be the person we were meant to be. We shout for joy, as abiding hope is within our grasp!

As we are all Created equal, we must respect the sanctity of human life. We are neither a random accident nor a muddle of genetic traits; rather, each of us is an essential treasure. When something is created, it is done so for a purpose. We commit ourselves to seeking, and ultimately finding, this special purpose. Amidst the noise of the world, a still, small voice is calling our names. As our Founders understood, there will be consequences for genuine valor, but we will be brave. With an unwavering faith in our founding principles, we stand up!

In doing what is right, we will always have a majority of one. Together, we will fight the good fight with a host of warriors. Their names echo in the wind: Washington, Jefferson, Adams... and so many, many more. Hand-in-hand we feel the longing of many hearts: a mother hugging her son as he goes off to join other young patriots, a farmer steadfastly working his field as he hungers for amber waves of grain, a merchant risking all of his savings to open a small country store, a teacher taking extra time with her students so that their minds might be opened to the great ideas of literature.

On July 8, 1776, a former slave heard a loud clanging of bells from the tower of Independence Hall. He ran to see what was taking place, arriving just in time to hear the first public reading of The Declaration. The words brought tears to his eyes, joy to his heart, and enduring resolve to his soul. He was, and is, the embodiment of the American Dream. That bell of liberty is now cracked and silent, but its message forever rings!

Our struggles are never in vain; goodness is never wasted. Truth will always prevail because we are not alone. In closing their majestic document, The Founders declared, "And for the support of this Declaration with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor." Today, we join the cause of our Founders. With faith and conviction, we solemnly sign our names.

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"The palace of my soul yearns for God. It burns as if it's in a fiery furnace. I discover that God loves me. He wants to recover my soul. I sometimes let horrible things into my life. I swallow as I drink the blood of God. I sometimes disturb Him with my sins. As the turbulent storm in my soul rages on, the ancient Lord still loves me. I explore the meaning of His love."

~ Matthew, inner-city 5th Grader after attending *Project American Life*

U. S. CONGRESS

The Foundations of Liberty Act ©

A Joint Resolution of the House of Representatives and the Senate of the United States:

Month, Day 20 ____

“We can succeed only by concert. It is not “can any of us imagine better?” but, “can we all do better?” The dogmas of the quiet past, are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise ~ with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew, and act anew. We must disenthrall ourselves, and then we shall save our country.”

~ Abraham Lincoln

On this day, our founding standard of “self-evident truths” has been dismissed in favor of the gods of man’s has fabrication. Most assuredly, apologies are owed to the ancient Israelites who have long been castigated regarding the golden calf they made in the wilderness. Postmodernism has taken things to new levels of hubris ~ rejecting the demands of reason and abolishing the idea of a Power above mortal men. Nonetheless, like the proverbial *Balm in Gilead*, there remains good news ~ what has been lost can be found! Those who have experienced the ultimate adventure of *Project American Life* are witnesses to the transformative power of these still “self-evident truths.” *PAL’s* news from the front lines is both clear and decisive: *America’s Founding Principles* yield a great bounty of good fruit! *Project American Life*: “*Building the City on a Hill... One Child at a Time.*”

Remember watching *I’m Just a Bill* from *Schoolhouse Rock*? Its message inspired me to write this “*Foundations of Liberty Act.*” After all, a citizen writing a bill isn’t unique to America’s history; citizens used to do such things routinely. Conversely, the initial drafts of bills these days are often written by lobbyists. If *we the people* desire our nation to be better... lamenting, cursing, blaming, slandering, etc. is not going to accomplish the goal. Instead, we must reclaim what is ours... the opportunities and duties of citizenship. We must rise... we must speak... we must debate... we must clarify... and let the best ideas prevail. This is how America is supposed to work! So, on this day... upon this solid rock... we will restore our nation’s Founding Principles from sea to shining sea! After all, this is America; we are Americans!

Without allegiance to any politician or political party, I offer the following bill... to be introduced on the floor of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate. Of course, we need actual Representatives and Senators to accomplish this; maybe it is time for them to listen to the citizenry instead of lobbyists. When we rise up rightly, the Congress will hear us; they are still OUR representatives. Imagine a nation wherein the coming generations are Free to think, Free to believe, Free to soar! We must press onward until this bill is passed in Congress and signed into law by the President of these United States... and this nation has a new birth of Freedom! “*From every Mountainside, Let Freedom Ring!*”

Mr. or Ms. _____ (for himself, herself, and many others) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Education.

Resolution—

Today, we reaffirm the commitment of the United States to create *an enlightened citizenry** by advancing religious liberty and the Great Cause of America within our nation’s public schools:

Whereas, according to the latest Pew Research Center’s Study of Global Restrictions on Religion, an estimated 79 percent of the world’s population lives in countries where religious liberty is highly restricted, either by the government or social conventions;

Whereas religious liberty contributes to political stability, economic empowerment, and healthy societies free of persecution and extremism;

Whereas the United States has long declared Religious Liberty to be a fundamental human right (expressly declared in both the Declaration of Independence and The Constitution);

Whereas the United States has a proud history of actively promoting religious liberty around the world, this foundational human right must clearly extend to our own citizens... regardless of age;

Whereas young Americans do not give up their religious liberty by attending the public schools funded by American parents and taxpayers;

Whereas public school students are often conditioned (including unintentionally) to think it out-of-bounds, inappropriate or even illegal to make mention of the Source of our treasured Liberty;

Whereas Americans have allowed a vocal minority to marginalize generations of citizens by keeping our national charters on the periphery... such that students are unable to appreciate or follow these priceless Principles for which so many gave full measure;

Whereas America’s Founders used indispensable religious nomenclature in crafting The Declaration of Independence (Creator, Nature’s God, Divine Providence), public school students should be able to hear and employ the same language without penalty or persecution;

Whereas each day in our nation’s public schools, students, parents, teachers and administrators are intimidated (legally and socially) from articulating, discussing, examining and applying *America’s Founding Principles...* prerequisites to performing subsequent Duties of Citizenship;

Whereas for the past 100 years, communism has oppressed billions and willfully exterminated over 100 million of its citizens. Though the mission of this godless governance was creating a “worker’s paradise,” communism has yielded torments, famines, forced abortions, cruel gulags, religious persecutions, and a host of mass murderers, including Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong, Pol Pot, Fidel Castro and Hugo Chávez;

Whereas, despite the overwhelming evidence, over half of American young people say they would rather live in a socialist nation than a capitalist Republic. Moreover, more than two-thirds have no knowledge of communism's atrocities, nor can they even rightly define the terms;

Whereas the primary author of The Constitution (James Madison) clarifies the demands of religious liberty in his Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments: "It is unalienable also, because what is here a right towards men, is a duty towards the Creator. It is the duty of every man to render to the Creator such homage and such only as he believes to be acceptable to him. This duty is precedent, both in order of time and in degree of obligation, to the claims of Civil Society. Before any man can be considered as a member of Civil Society, he must be considered as a subject of the Governor of the Universe."

Whereas religious liberty is essential for preserving our nation's ideals, the highest aspirations of mankind, and America herself, it is our sacred duty to cultivate the still "self-evident truths" that have long informed, captivated, inspired, and guided *We the People*;

Whereas for over 25 years *Project American Life*** has rekindled *America's Founding Principles* within America's youngest citizens... inspiring them to understand and appreciate our Founders' noble ideals, sacred honor, and ultimate sacrifices. *PAL* is an enduring and efficacious archetype for compelling new generations to "rise up and live out the true meaning of (their) creed;"

Whereas our Founders and their worldview are increasingly disparaged, Patrick Henry's clarion call still echoes, "*Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!*"

Now, therefore, be it Resolved, the House and Senate—

(1) Reaffirms the commitment of the United States to creating "an enlightened citizenry"* by protecting and advancing religious liberty and the Great Cause of America;

(2) Acknowledges that America is the only nation in history not constructed of ethnicities or other forms of tribalism. Rather, America is built upon moral propositions... still "self-evident truths" yielding treasured ideas such as "Created equal" and "unalienable rights." Therefore, our Founding Principles must not be forbidden, or even restrained, within our public institutions;

3) Reclaims the Founding Principles of the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness;"

(4) Recognizes that the citizenry has empowered government to use tax revenue to create schools serving the cause of *an enlightened citizenry*.* Thus, it is both right and proper to inculcate *America's Founding Principles* into the hearts, minds, and souls of coming generations;

(5) Demands that The Constitution's 1st Amendment be operational: "*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.*" Clearly, no "religion" is "established" by using our Founders' language, as no "religion" is even identified;

(6) Supports schoolteachers in reclaiming our Founding Liberty to employ the language, embody the worldview, and amplify the dream of America. To these heroic ends, references to a *Creator, Nature's God, Divine Providence*, etc. may be exercised without fear or trepidation;

(7) Recalls Dr. Martin Luther King's use of the Declaration of Independence (our promissory note) in achieving our most noble goal to "rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed;"

(8) Instructs the Department of Education to clarify that individual states do not possess the authority to violate the moral demands of The Declaration of Independence or the legal demands of the 1st Amendment of The Constitution by restraining religious liberty within public schools;

(9) Empowers the Department of Education to provide clarifications in legal applications as well as directives in policy. The DOE will encourage and assist states in providing large copies of The Declaration of Independence and The Constitution for display in all American classrooms;

(10) Implores all educators, government agencies, and charitable organizations to share information, host training workshops, develop pedagogy, and teach American civic and history curriculum that helps in the advancement of *an enlightened citizenry*;*

(11) Directs the Department of Education to compile and disseminate a database of supplemental resources in the service of this resolution (e.g., copies of this resolution, a list of speakers, and supplemental programming options such as the proven methods of *Project American Life***);

(12) Provides comprehensive tolerance and inclusion in our nation's public schools, as we embrace our Founding Principles and ALL the people they serve. Without regard to zip codes, we infuse each of our nation's public schools with the sacred truths of our noble heritage... instruments of inspiration and empowerment of the total child: heart, mind and soul;

(13) Declares the American Standards that have illumined the world... the transcendent ideas and Ideals constructed from a Divine Intentionality. We again recognize these still "self-evident truths"... the enduring foundations for human dignity and human "Rights"... the guiding rationale for societies built upon what is forever Good, not a brute calculus of the present might;

And so, on this new day, we renew our founding slogan: *E Pluribus Unum*... out of many, one. We again come together to be *One Nation, under God, Indivisible* such that we might be true to our PRESENT motto: *In God we Trust!* Today, we recommit ourselves to creating the best schools in the world... where everyone is free to think, express, discover and explore. May we strive anew for "*Liberty and Justice for All!*" Today, we reach for President Lincoln's infamous address at Gettysburg, "*That we here highly resolve these dead shall not have died in vain; that the nation, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people by the people for the people, shall not perish from the earth.*"

Today, this Congress (the representatives of the citizens of these United States of America), proclaims with strong and clear voice, “*From every Mountainside, Let Freedom Ring!*”

WE SIGN OUR NAMES BELOW:

© This bill has been written by Jamie Aiken, just an ordinary citizen.

* “*I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education. This is the true corrective of abuses of constitutional power.*” ~ Thomas Jefferson

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Here’s to a new Yorktown... Cheers!

Project American Life ©

732 Montgomery Highway, # 246
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216
(205) 823-8446

ProjectAmericanLife.com

Soli Deo Gloria!