

First Speech Before the Dearborn Board of Education

By Eric J. Lakits

Good evening ladies and gentlemen,

There is a philosophy destroying our community. It does so because its advocates claim that it's the interests of the community that they wish to protect while they go on to sacrifice the individuals of whom a community is made up. It is the philosophy that says your life is not your own, that the pursuit of your own self interest is evil. It is the philosophy of Altruism. It says that rather than being free to choose whom we deal with and on what terms, we are instead all bound together through sacrifice. And it is a one-sided sacrifice at that. The ability of some is sacrificed to the needs of others. We are to sacrifice fortune to misfortune, ability to disability, competence to incompetence, and sacrifice our honor students to the mentally handicapped. (As well as every other student for that matter.)

There is a large segment of our community that needs our help. And I am here to do my best and see that they get that help. The group of people that I refer to is not poor, it is not homeless, it is not going hungry. The group of people that I refer to is helpless in a deeper respect, because it has no political voice in our community. It is the *group*, composed of *individual* students, which is endanger of being forced into slavery against its will.

Whether you call it mandatory servitude, community service, or volunteerism makes no difference. All are just politically correct ways of saying slavery. Our schools are government institutions. Since students are required to attend by the government, any requirements of servitude are a direct violation of the individual rights of each student who attends. Our federal government has taken the lead with its discussion of volunteerism, but attempts to hide behind the fact that is merely taking an indirect role that is influential at best. We are supposed to feel safe that any such measures are made at the local levels of government in a forum such as this. Government, whether local or federal, is still government. Whether people are voted into slavery by the nation as a whole, or by a small group within their own community makes no difference. The result is slavery nonetheless.

Suppose we ask ourselves "why? What is the purpose of sending our children to school?" Is it to teach them morals and values? If so, whose morals? What values? And by what standard? Furthermore, how do we insure that all morals and values are represented equally and fairly? Or, if this is not possible, how do we decide which get included while others are excluded? Another answer to our question is that we send them to school so that they may receive the necessary tools to choose their own rational values--tools such as reading, writing, history, and arithmetic. However, this implies an act of choice and of self-interest. It implies the long term goal of bettering oneself so that one can earn his own living, support his own life and pursue his own self interest. Or in a more classical formulation, the pursuit of happiness. Which is better? Should we be forcing students to empty bedpans against their will? Or should we be teaching them how to earn their own way in the world so that they don't become dependents themselves?

You might ask, “what if someone *wants* to sacrifice for others? Couldn’t they at least get credit for an elective course?” For those who want to partake in such activities on their personal time, no one shall prevent them. However, let’s not reward students for making the choice to do so with credits toward graduation, while not rewarding others for making the choice to do otherwise. The favoritism of such a policy would imply that your life is not your own--that serving others brings rewards while pursuing your own self interest does not. Let us remember that charitable activities should be acts of choice NOT of compulsion. Thank you.