



## The Difficult Choice: Comfort or Self-Reliance

Are the American people willing to give up the comforts of the Nanny State in exchange for self-reliant individualism? Before the New Deal of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Americans did indeed rely on their individual efforts to maintain home and family. My parents came to this country in the 1920s, before there was a welfare state, and my father had to support his wife and five children without the aid of the government. And so, with the help of a nephew, he got a pushcart and started selling vegetables at the open-air market under the New York Central railway el on Park Avenue.



I don't recall ever going without three square meals a day during all of those years that included the Great Depression. To my parents, America was indeed the Golden Land, a real paradise on earth. To my mother, our tenement apartment was a palace compared to what they had back in Poland.

Yes, my parents did lose their savings in one of the banks that went under in the early years of the Depression, but everyone continued to work and save. We did not have a consumer economy in those days. You bought things to last, and you were frugal with money. But the economic crisis made it possible for the social Democrats to begin building the Welfare State.

And after 70 years of more and more government programs leading us to greater and greater dependency on state welfarism, most Americans of today have no idea what it was like to live as individuals totally dependent on one's own energy and resources for economic security. And this is a problem that Beverly Eakman addresses in her revolutionary little book, *A Common Sense Platform for the 21st Century*. She writes: "People would rather be comfortable than self-reliant; popular, not self-sufficient."

She adds further: "In 1960, the historian Henry Wriston complained in a *Wall Street Journal* article that the individual was no longer 'at the core of our political, religious and economic thought.' Individualism, not comfort, he said was the price of freedom.... But as [he] noted, 'nothing in the Bill of Rights promises that the freedoms there guaranteed can be enjoyed in a serene atmosphere.' Speaking out on controversial matters, he insisted, requires discomfort if freedom is to amount to anything."

I submit that the large number of Americans who compose the Tea Party movement are aware to some extent of what their revolution implies: a return to individual self-reliance and less reliance on government. What this means in practical terms is that we must begin dismantling the great Super-State. But where do we begin? The Democrats immediately accuse the Tea Partiers of trying to get rid of Social Security and Medicare. That's the easiest way to frighten the American people. Yes, those programs can be reformed, but they are definitely not the place to begin.

Let's begin by first dismantling the Great Educational Empire built by the progressives, which is deliberately dumbing down the nation, creating rampant illiteracy, particularly among African-Americans and Latinos, and destroying the religion and morals of America's youth.



Written by [Sam Blumenfeld](#) on December 19, 2010

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Abolishing the U.S. Department of Education is the perfect place to start, for it can be proven that ever since that department was created, education has simply gotten worse and worse. By restoring educational freedom and parental control over the education of their children, we can also start creating a truly educated population. The home-school movement can be used as the model of what can be done in education without government interference.

There are ways to privatize our education system. Each public school can be turned into a private institution, run by a Board of Trustees chosen by the municipality. Parents would be required to pay tuition, thus relieving home owners of much of their real estate taxes. Children of poor parents could be given scholarships funded by a town foundation created just for that purpose.

In that way, the socialist-dominated National Education Association would no longer be able to dictate to local school boards how to run their schools. Indeed, privatization would leave curriculum development and textbook purchases up to the school's trustees who could hire consultants to recommend programs that work.

Privatization would improve education and thereby make parents more comfortable with the schools than they are now with government schools that don't educate.

That's where we can start dismantling the socialist superstructure imposed on America by our progressive educators. And by doing so we would be able to prove that getting rid of the U. S. Department of Education will not only save the taxpayer billions of dollars but actually improve education. In other words, it can become the perfect model of how to dismantle other federal agencies and their bureaucracies that are destroying our freedom.

Bev Eakman believes that Americans assign a higher premium to being comfortable than being free. But once they start dismantling the Super-State they may discover that they can be both comfortable and free by restoring confidence in their own ability to lead their lives in accordance with the principles of government that have made us the greatest, freest, richest, and most comfortable nation in human history.

**Dr. Samuel L. Blumenfeld** is the author of nine books on education including *NEA: Trojan Horse in American Education*, *The Whole Language/OBE Fraud*, and *The Victims of Dick & Jane and Other Essays*. Of *NEA: Trojan Horse in American Education*, former U.S. Senator Steve Symms of Idaho said: "Every so often a book is written that can change the thinking of a nation. This book is one of them." Mr. Blumenfeld's columns have appeared in such diverse publications as *Reason*, *The New American*, *The Chalcedon Report*, *Insight*, *Education Digest*, *Vital Speeches*, *WorldNetDaily*, and others.



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