



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on September 26, 2012

When Michelle Obama Starts Starving the Kids

Unprecedented school-lunch regulations have just gone into effect, and they suggest a new answer to the question “Where’s the beef?”: not on students’ plates— or on their bones. The regulations are a result of Michelle Obama’s “Healthy and Hunger Free Kids Act,” which was passed by the lame-duck, Democrat-controlled Congress in December 2010. And the result has been wasted food, endangered health, and hungrier kids.



The problem is that, in typical nanny-state style, the regulations not only prescribe foods many children find unpalatable, they also apply unrealistic calorie restrictions on students: “650 calories for elementary-schoolers, 700 for middle-schoolers and 850 for high-schoolers,” [writes](#) Suzanne Tobias of the *Wichita Eagle*.

Yet more perspective is gained when you consider that the government’s dietary limitations wouldn’t be out of place in a wartime prison camp. For example, [writes](#) PJ Media, “Current regulations limit servings of protein, which could be anything from a hamburger to a side of beans, to 1.5 ounces two days a week and 2 ounces the other three days.”

This has prompted protests, including a [video](#) parodying the situation. And while this may seem a tempest in a teapot in a world coming apart at the seams, it’s a prime example of the folly of government control.

Let’s start like this: What kind of calorie-dense stupidity is required to prescribe the same diet for a lanky, high-metabolism 16-year-old boy athlete as you would for a female agemate with weight issues? As PJ Media pointed out, an active-student athlete may require 5000 calories a day, and I can relate to this because I once was that lanky teenage boy.

As a junior and senior in high school, I was already more than six feet tall but never weighed above 155 pounds despite regularly clearing dinner tables like a hurdler. Being a serious tennis player, however, I was always looking for an edge. So one day I decided to adopt the diet in Robert Haas’ book *Eat to Win*; Haas had become quite well-renowned at the time because of his status as Martina Navratilova’s nutritionist.

Well, I started to feel like the gypsy-cursed attorney in the movie *Thinner*. No matter how much of Haas’ low-calorie offerings I ate, I simply could not keep weight on. After a month and a half I’d melted down to about 148 pounds, and that was when I said to myself (literally), “This diet may be okay for Navratilova, who has the metabolism of a primeval sloth, but it’s not going to work for a guy my age.” I went back to my old eating habits — which included a large nightly bowl of ice cream.

Clearly, putting a lean, active teenage boy on an 850-calorie per meal diet is unhealthful. And 1.5 to 2 ounces of protein a day? Is this Bangladeshi exceptionalism? One of the triumphs of modern civilization is that we have made protein — something highly valued historically but often in short supply — readily available to the common man. But now the oddly uncommon men (otherwise known as progressives)



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who complain of atavistic impulses in their opponents want to turn back the clock to times of privation. Why, the regulations will even eliminate school salad bars — because the government cannot control the type and amount of food students choose from them.

This, however, is what happens when statist officials a thousand miles away make special-interest-spawned policy for everyone else. In this case, the special interest is Michelle Obama, who has long had weight issues and now is imposing her priorities and requirements on the rest of us. To [paraphrase](#) GOP Congressman Steve King, “Because some kids are overweight, the government is putting every child on a diet.”

Then there’s the waste. While the state now prohibits students from refusing items they dislike, the kids cannot be forced (yet) to actually eat them; the result is edible food discarded on a massive scale. Principal Jim Bolden of the Caldwell Unified School District in Kansas [says](#) that one day at the semester’s start “four boxes of peaches” were just thrown away, and Rep. Tim Huelskamp (R-Kan.) complains of how the regulations are “filling the trash cans with uneaten food.”

And the school food regulations have other unintended consequences. For example, while school classes, teams, and organizations will no longer be allowed to sell any food to raise money starting next year, a junk-food black market has [formed](#) on many campuses. But the statist aren’t content with merely pushing junk food underground, as some schools have actually prohibited students from bringing their own lunches with them. You see, it would reduce statist’s control — and the amount of money they get for their lunch programs.

So when we learned that the Obamas believed in redistribution, no one knew they were referring to calories as well as cash. But this is what happens when we empower people who agree with the [statement](#), “The number one greatest national security threat that we have is obesity.”

In a way, though, Michelle Obama’s above sentiment was correct: Our own obese government can do more to tyrannize us than any foreign enemy.

I think we all know who and what need to be put on a diet.



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