
the creation of legally privileged castes. To guarantee jobs, promotions, and contracts to some groups, while excluding others, is to return to feudalism.

Relying on the work of the great French medievalist Marc Bloch, the authors argue that “[h]istory’s compelling lesson is that privileges once granted are not easily rescinded” (p. 129). This ingenious parallel brings to mind a similar display of ingenuity in a notable early essay on the Pirenne thesis by the book’s senior author. But this is by the way.

By their sharp challenge to conventional opinion, Roberts and Stratton have compelled a complete rethinking of the civil rights decisions of the Warren Court and its successors. ♦

Communism for Kids

IT TAKES A VILLAGE:
AND OTHER LESSONS
CHILDREN TEACH US
Hillary Rodham Clinton
Simon & Schuster, 1996, 319 pgs.

Hillary Clinton is, to say the least, a controversial person; but a reader who had never heard of her before taking up this volume might never suspect

it. She appears here in the tones of sweet reason, doling out, in roughly equal doses, banal advice about children and stories, meant to be charming, about her family.

To read her remarks while knowing something of the background of the First Couple is a strange experience. She tells us, with becoming modesty, “I have spent much of the past twenty-five years working to improve the lives of children” (p. 7). No doubt she invested in cattle futures in the hope that a windfall would enable her to help many more children than before. When she says, “My strong feelings about divorce and its effects on children have caused me to bite my tongue more than a few times during my own marriage and I think instead about what I could do to be a better wife and partner,” one cannot but wonder what she had to stop herself from saying. I suspect that Gennifer Flowers and other women of easy virtue frequently drove her to mutter, but it would have been good to hear the stories straight from the horse’s mouth.

Hillary, though, is not really someone to be dismissed with laughter. She wields immense power; and, as this book makes clear, she has a chilling agenda in store for our children. However hard she tries, she cannot disguise her totalitarian urges.

The key to Hillary’s thought, such as it is, appears in the chapter

“The Bell Curve Is a Curve Ball.” The fundamental failing of parents, we learn, is to believe that children are born good or bad. “One father who brought in his badly injured three-year-old [to the emergency room] claimed that he had beaten the boy to ‘get the devil out of him.’ Behind his horrifying actions lurked the belief that babies are born either good or bad. If their fundamental nature is ‘bad,’ as evidenced by behavior like persistent crying, this crazy logic goes, they must be punished, beaten if necessary” (p. 53).

The First Matron’s construal of the story is difficult to fathom. If the father had thought the boy so fixed in badness that he could not be changed, why would he have done anything to him at all? The story can just as well be taken instead to show that it is dangerous to believe that children’s behavior can be influenced by their parents: look what horror ensued when a man tried to give effect to his environmentalist creed.

But of course Hillary is not here engaging in rational argument. She wishes rather to implant a picture in the reader’s mind. Parents, left

to themselves, are dangerous to children; they must be suitably guided by experts. “Recent discussions in neuroscience, molecular biology, and psychology have given researchers a whole new understanding of when and how the human brain develops. Their findings are a crucial kind of coaching that can show parents and other caregivers how to elicit a child’s full potential” (p. 52).

As the First Lady sees matters, human beings in their first few years are indefinitely malleable. Through proper cultivation techniques, their “potential” can be fully developed, of course

under the direction of the state. “If we as a village decide not to help families develop their children’s brains. . . . let us acknowledge that we are not using all the tools at our disposal to better the lives of our children” (p. 61).

So anxious is she to induce belief in her dogma of mental plasticity that she does not hesitate to distort the research of those who arrive at other views. “It has become fashionable in some quarters to assert that intelligence is fixed at birth, part of our genetic makeup that is invulnerable to change, a

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claim promoted by Charles Murray and the late Richard Herrnstein in their 1994 book, *The Bell Curve*. . . . But research provides us with plenty of evidence that this perspective is not only unscientific but insidious” (p. 59).

Of course, these authors do not make the blatantly false claim that intelligence is invulnerable to change. But research provides us with plenty of evidence that Hillary is an unscrupulous propagandist.

Ideally, in her view children in their first three years will have the benefit of expert direction, so their brains can be grown in hothouse fashion. But what happens once children reach the age of three? Their brains have now, one presumes, received the full benefits of efficient cultivation. May these brains, and the bodies that encase them, now be returned to their parents?

I fear that Hillary has rather more in mind for her young charges: “Imagine a country in which nearly all children between the ages of three and five attend preschool. . . . Imagine a country that conceives of child care as a program to ‘welcome’ children into the larger community and ‘awaken’ their potential for learn-

ing and growing” (p. 220). Large schools, with “sparkling classrooms” are of course the order of the day. She warns against family day care: standards cannot be readily supervised, and care not under the supervision of Big Sister may be unscientific.

But we have hitherto underestimated the scope of Hillary’s plans for us. So far, the child from birth to age five has been brought into line. But a space for freedom has been overlooked.

Women have been left to bear children as they wish. Such foolishness cannot be allowed. Experts to their battle stations!

Hillary, ever alert to the menace of spontaneity, does not disappoint us. The state must follow an active policy of family planning: “It is tragic that our country does not do more to promote research into family planning and wider access to contraceptive methods because of the highly charged politics of abortion” (pp. 72–73). That some might think this an improper area for state meddling does not trouble Hillary. Roman Catholics and others who have questions of conscience about contraception are unworthy of mention: science, in the person of its avatar, has spoken.

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A minor obstacle, called parents, threatens to block Hillary's road to Shangri-La. She knows how to deal with this enemy: "We could be willing to terminate parental rights more quickly whenever physical or sexual abuse [of course as defined by her and her minions] is involved. . . . We could make decisions by birth parents to give up children for adoption more difficult to overturn" (p. 49).

The use of claims of abuse to place children in the hands of experts is dear to the heart of our author. "If the police decide to proceed with charges against *any adult in a child's home*, even as an accessory to a crime, child protective workers should assist in deciding whether the child should stay in the home or be moved to safer ground. And social workers and courts should make decisions about terminating parental rights of abusive parents more quickly" (pp. 173-74; emphasis added). No one of course thinks children should be abused; but Hillary's avidity to seize children from their natural parents makes one's blood run cold.

At times, Hillary poses as the champion of family values, but her crude charade will fool no one. Thus, she deplors the frequency of divorce, rightly noting that children often suffer when a family breaks up. But what has she to offer in solution? "Some courts

now require that divorcing parents attend classes and learn about the potential effects of divorce on their children. They are given training" (p. 45). Once more the state's experts must instruct the canaille in the habits their betters think suitable for them.

If you do not have children, you should not feel left out; Hillary has plans for you, too. Her schemes to bring children under state tutelage require that much of the economy be regulated as well. Businesses ought to offer *paid* leave to new fathers (as well as maternity leave, of course) so that both parents can receive adequate training for their new jobs as Child Managers, Grade I.

Whether employees wish to receive part of their wages in the form of these benefits of course does not matter to her. She deplors the reluctance of insurance companies to sell policies to families with children who suffer from diseases such as cystic fibrosis. The fact that these companies are profit-making enterprises, not associations for universal benevolence, matters not a whit. They too have their appointed place in the New Order.

I hope, but do not much expect, that Hillary Clinton will interrupt her immense labors for the welfare of children to answer this: "who made you a ruler and judge over us?" (*Exod. 2:14*). ♦

Hail to the Congress

WAR AND RESPONSIBILITY:
CONSTITUTIONAL LESSONS
OF VIETNAM AND ITS
AFTERMATH

John Hart Ely
Princeton University Press, x +
244 pp.

As I write these lines, an American soldier, no doubt the first of many to come, has been killed while taking part in the American “peacekeeping” mission in Bosnia. Many in Congress, including most of the Republican candidates for President, oppose sending our troops to “a far away country of which we know nothing.” Opinion polls unanimously declare that the American people do not want to go to war in Bosnia.

But in foreign affairs, the rule nowadays seems to be, “Congress (and the American people) propose; the President decides.” President Clinton has committed our troops to Bosnia; and patriotic duty, it is alleged, demands that we support the Commander-in-Chief.

War and Responsibility appeared long before President Clinton’s costly effort to make Bosnia safe for democracy, but it has never been more relevant. John Hart

Ely’s brilliant book establishes incontrovertibly that it is Congress, not the President, who has under the Constitution the sole power to involve U.S. forces in war.

Many areas of constitutional law generate issues of Byzantine complexity, but this one does not. “The power to declare war was constitutionally vested in Congress. The debates, and early practice, establish that this meant that all wars, big or small, ‘declared’ in so many words or not—most weren’t, even then—had to be legislatively authorized. Indeed, only one delegate to either the Philadelphia [Constitutional] convention or any of the state ratifying conventions, Pierce Butler, is recorded as suggesting that authority to start a war be vested in the president” (p. 3, notes omitted). Butler’s view was at once repudiated.

For most of our history, presidents scrupulously obeyed the command of the Constitution. “And when certain presidents did play a little fast and loose with congressional prerogatives—Polk at the start of the Mexican War; Wilson and Roosevelt, respectively, in the events leading up to the First and Second World Wars—they obscured or covered up the actual facts, pledging public fealty to the constitutional need for congressional authorization of military action” (p. 10, note omitted).

Ely does not include Lincoln’s actions at the start of the Civil War