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***"Freedom of the Press belongs to those who own one."***

*A. J. Liebling of the New Yorker*

**August 22, 2001**



### **More School Failure Reports**

**I***n the writing exam given to fourth and seventh graders in the Poway Unified School District this past May, 72% failed at the fourth grade level and 85% failed at the seventh grade level.*

*An article in the North County Times says the school administrators are "perplexed."*

*They are not perplexed. They know the reasons even better than those of us who follow education.*

*Anyone who follows the education reform movement could have predicted the results. Education is a mess. If fast food emporiums did not have pictures of various hamburger and chicken options and an automatic change feature, fast food businesses would go out of business in a day!*

*Last year the Superintendent of the Los Angeles Unified School District admitted that if he had to enforce a graduation exam on his graduating high school seniors, more than half would fail. Excuses abound, from underpaid teachers to too rigorous an exam to crowded classrooms to lack of discipline in today's youth to...*

*None of these can be addressed until everyone first admits there is a problem. Teachers unions adamantly*

**Commentary**



*oppose testing of the students, and even more adamantly oppose testing of teachers! When Massachusetts finally administered a 10<sup>th</sup> grade exam to a group of new teachers several years ago, more than half failed!*

*While administrators are not blameless, particularly in their failure to support rigorous discipline codes even when teachers bring disruptive students to administration attention, it is in the classroom where the rubber meets the road.*

*A teacher recently wrote a column in the North County Times blaming everyone except the teachers: The students are undisciplined and often hungry, so the parents are to blame. The teachers are the victims, according to the writer, underpaid, overworked, and underappreciated.*

*Hogwash! I will support greater concern for teachers when their unions support testing of teachers to make certain they are literate and qualified in the subjects they teach! California teachers have uniformly quashed any attempt of the public to find out what they know.*

*This is an outrage, but testing of the teachers is never going to happen short of an educational revolution brought on by parents – and the Parent Teachers Association is FIRMLY in the pocket of the National Education Association and American Federation of Teachers.*

*The numbers do not lie, but as a member of my family recently said, when I answered her question about a local school: "I don't want to hear that."*

*Ah, we continue to live in Lake Woebegone, where all children are above normal.*

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**"In California...40% of all school funds go for fifty-one categories of education excluding the three Rs, history and science, but including special ed, environmental ed, bilingual ed, sex ed, teen pregnancy ed, drug ed, cultural awareness, and gang intervention."**

**George Gilder --  
Telecosm**

