

Hostage drill at NJ school features mock 'Christian terrorists'

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The head of a national, Texas-based pro-family group says a recent hostage drill at a New Jersey high school, which portrayed conservative Christians as terrorists, is reflective of a dangerous philosophy that has become prevalent in many parts of America, where it is having negative effects on education.

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A local paper reports that a drill at Burlington Township High School in New Jersey involved police portraying mock gunmen, described as "members of a right-wing fundamentalist group called the 'New Crusaders' who don't believe in the separation of church and state." The fake gunmen were said to have been "seeking justice because the daughter of one [member] had been expelled for praying before class."

Historian and constitutional expert David Barton is president of [WallBuilders](#), a national pro-family organization that distributes historical, legal, and statistical information and helps citizens become active in their local schools and communities. He says the stereotyping used in the high school's drill is an accurate indicator of what is being taught in public schools in the Northeast region of the country.

"It's been interesting to see the indoctrination that goes on," Barton notes, "where we've had in the same region, even federal courts up in that same area, say it's okay to start teaching second graders about homosexuality and homosexual 'marriage.'"

Also, the author and historian observes, the common thinking prevalent in this region is "that, by the way, we do not have to notify parents that we're going to indoctrinate kids because this is such an important societal value that all citizens need it." But in fact, he asserts, such liberal indoctrination of students in religious and moral areas of thought has been shown to lead to some undesirable outcomes.

"There is now a study that has been done by the University of Connecticut that shows that kids who have gone through that type of education actually know less academically than when they enter [school], and they're calling that phenomenon 'negative learning,'" Barton points out. "So that kind of indoctrination or philosophy is having an adverse effect academically," he says.

Nevertheless, the WallBuilders founder observes, liberal attitudes like the one that informs the Burlington Township High School drill are "fairly reflective of the philosophy that has really inculcated that part of the country. He says many schools, local officials, and members of Congress from the Northeast share a strong hostility toward traditional values.

The "separation of church and state" phrase invoked in the school hostage drill, Barton asserts, was rarely used by America's founding fathers and is currently construed by many liberals to mean almost exactly the opposite of what it originally meant, protecting churches from the government.

Correction: Removes inaccurate reference to "New England" in third paragraph. (4/2/2007)

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