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EDUCATION CHARTER

for the

CHILDREN

of

SOUTH - AFRICA

The Education Charter for the Children of South-Africa has been drawn up by South-African parents, who are not satisfied with present-day education.

Circumstances have caused many parents to lose sight of their responsibilities, resulting in a deterioration in education, increase in juvenile delinquency and other asocial phenomena.

It is felt that in order to ensure the best for their children, it is necessary for parents to re-affirm the responsibilities attached to parenthood.

This must benefit the individual and the community.

Education Vigilance Committee.
Republic of South-Africa, 1962.

P R E A M B L E

The child
in the home and in society
has needs which he cannot of himself satisfy
and rights which he is powerless to demand.

In any enlightened home and society
parents as well as the state will endeavour
to evolve codes of behaviour
to satisfy the needs of the child
and to protect him against any infringements
of his rights.

Once his basic needs for love, food and shelter
have been satisfied
the further needs of a child are largely
educational.

Education
is any form of contribution to the development
of mind and body
towards perfection.

Education implies
the development of original thought
and critical faculties,
the formation of character,
the acquisition of knowledge and
the development of the body.

Educating the child implies
contributing to his development
until he is mature, responsible and independent.

P A R E N T S :

Duties and responsibilities to
their offspring
are inherent in the status of parents
and accepted by them as a consequence of
marriage.

Parents are obliged
to contribute to the education of their children from birth
to maturity
to the utmost of their ability.

Parents are solely responsible for the
first and most important stage of the education
of their children.

This takes place in the home.

Harmonious family life is essential
for the child's healthy growth and development.

The growth and development of the infant is spontaneous;
Problems and difficulties arise which make
the continued presence of at least one of the parents
desirable, if not essential.

During the pre-school years parents must develop in the child

the ability to differentiate between good and bad;
norms of evaluation;

character, emphasizing self-discipline,
tolerance and consideration for others;
elementary knowledge.

Further education necessary to reach maturity
which the parents are not able to provide due to lack of time
and/or qualifications
must be given to children in schools.

Parents are still primarily responsible
for the child's education during school-years.

Parents are responsible
for sending their children to those schools
which in their opinion provide them with the
best educational facilities
available in the light of the circumstances
surrounding the family.

Parents must give the full support of the home
to the child's school education.

To differentiate between good and bad is the most important exercise of the critical faculties and depends on certain norms of evaluation.

Since these norms are different for parents belonging to different denominations, parents are responsible for selecting the schools which conform to their beliefs.

All schools should be concerned with distinctions between right and wrong - which affect all citizens alike.

Parents have the right to establish schools of any religious denomination or schools to serve the special needs of any group within the community.

Parents with children at denominational schools should be vigilant to see that their children are educated with due respect for those who belong to other denominations.

Parents must oppose
any form of party-political indoctrination
at denominational, secular or any other schools.

Parents must be vigilant to see
that the State performs its educational duties.

Parents are entitled
to an equal return of tax
used for educational purposes.

THE STATE :

Without interfering with the rights and obligations of parents
the State must ensure
that every child has equal opportunity
to develop to its full mental and physical capacity.

To ensure this equal opportunity implies
that the State must subsidise all schools
with the same amount of finance per child attending.

The State must ensure
that education is universal
and cannot be used to further party-political aims.

The State must ensure that education is put beyond any control other than educational control.

Therefore the State must organise the Departments of Education on a basis which puts them beyond party-political control.

The State must provide the Departments of Education with funds adequate for the execution of the educational program.

The Departments of Education must:

- provide compulsory education for all children;
- lay down a compulsory academic and technical standard of education;
- ensure that authorities in control of teachers are themselves qualified and reputable educationists of sufficient wisdom to guide and advise teachers while respecting their professional status;

- provide means for research;
- ensure that all textbooks in use in the schools are without bias and contribute to the aim of all true education: the search for truth;
- allow all schools a free choice of textbooks provided that they fulfill the conditions specified above.

The State must always consider the child as an individual with the right to individual thought, freedom of thought, speech and conscience.

It is the duty of the State to protect these rights.

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