The Dictator's Practical Guide
to Education

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This is the second guide in the dictator's series.

The first was the Dictator's Practical Internet Guide to Power Retention written by Laurier Rochon:

http://assets.pwd.io/pwd/media/The_Dictator_s_Practical _Internet_Guide_Laurier_Rochon.pdf

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

It cannot be denied that education is one of the cornerstones of any modern society. Along with internal security and the military, running the education system of your non-democratic nation is one of the most important tasks that your government will spend its time with. Education is important and is something that you need to be concerned with, but that doesn't mean that all forms of education are equal. The system of education in your nation needs to be carefully designed, created and molded with specific goals in mind.

Your nation will want a comprehensive system of education that will allow you to transmit the goals, knowledge and values to your citizens that you wish them to have. As well, corporations that choose to do business in your nation will require employees who have solid reading and writing skills and who can follow directions that have been given to them. Many companies are looking for employees who have math and science skills as well.

The danger of running an education system is that over the past twenty years, calls have increased dramatically for schools to be reformed. All around the world, parents, employers, and general members of the public are dissatisfied with the education that children receive and are calling for governments to reform both the curriculum that is available and the way that learning actually takes place. As you know, when many people in your nation are unhappy with something, you need to pay attention to

ensure that your time in power is long and prosperous. This guide is meant to provide some general guidelines for you to think about when shaping the education system of your nation.

This is where your dictatorship need to be careful. The pressure for reforms to take place is real. Governments must be seen to be doing something. You must be seen to be taking these calls for reform seriously and putting plans in to place to change what is happening in your school system. But you must be careful. A well rounded, quality education system is a dangerous force for change in a society. Coping with a well educated, curious and technologically empowered population is a dangerous task for governments such as yours who want to remain in power. This will require a balancing act. Changes can be made to education systems. As the leader of your government, you can advance large scale reforms to satisfy your populace. But careful planning is required to make sure that the reforms which do move forward allow a certain type of education and learning to take place.

While many dictators have tried over the years to simply abolish education systems and have their people remain uneducated working on communal farms or placed in work camps, this actually isn't the best choice you can make. You are far better off to have a system in place that teaches your people the skills and attitudes that you want them to have. This will give you the opportunity to mould your population the way you want. A school system which emphasizes following directions, rules, and rote learning;

which tests students repeatedly and rewards them for knowing only certain kinds of information, is a system which will help to ensure you remain in power. A system like this will also help your people to believe that their children are receiving a powerful, meaningful education for their future.

2.0 ORGANIZATION

Schooling should be mandatory for your population at a young age. There is great danger in leaving students at home with their parents once they reach an impressionable age. As soon as possible, parents should be required to enrol their children in state run programs where they can be taught the attitudes, values and content that you want them to have. This will separate them from the values they may be learning at home and get them into the government run system where you can dictate what they are learning and how their attitudes are formed.

Students should be organized as much as possible on the basis of age. This will get them used to being with their peers and will also prepare them for the military training which you will presumably be encouraging or requiring them to take part in at a later point in their life. Your system should not be fluid and based on abilities or interests, but instead, your students need to get used to being organized in ways that fit the needs of your society, its military, and your corporations.

As with any school system, there will be children who will struggle with the content that your schools are covering, while other students will do exceptionally well. While you must appear to be concerned for the students who struggle, it is much more important it keep a close eye on the students in your buildings who do exceptionally well. You have a few options for dealing with them. You might consider removing them from your regular school system and placing them in separate schools which are designed to support these more elite students and train them for more advanced roles in your government. On the other hand, you might simply want teachers to identify these students early to local officials of your government so that you can watch them for the growth of any attitudes and skills which you consider to be against your policies and beliefs.

3.0 SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM DESIGN

There has been a lot of research lately concerning the effectiveness of different learning spaces. This is an area that has long been ignored. Schools looked very similar for years in many parts of the world. While this recent research needs to be looked at, it should mostly be discounted. Most school design research focuses on making learning spaces open, accessible and flexible for learners. This isn't the image that you want your schools to project. Your schools should project the power and strength of your regime. They should be edifices that serve as local reminders to people across your country of your power, your reach, and your concern for them.

The same should be true of the individual classrooms inside of the schools. Different learning spaces allow for different types of learning to emerge naturally. Since you are working to ensure that your classrooms are filled with rote learning and memorization, the classroom organization and furniture should reflect that. Rows of desks, (bolted to the floors if possible) should make up the majority of the furniture that is present. Few or small windows should admit little natural light and should be combined with strong overhead lighting. The furniture should be hard and heavy. Overall, the impression that you want to project is the power of your regime and the difficulty and importance of the enterprise of education. There should be little opportunity for personalization, local control, or change. If possible, a teacher or a student should be able to transfer from one school to another and see little difference between them.

4.0 CURRICULUM

In its most basic sense, the curriculum in a school describes the information that the students in that place study. It is important that nondemocratic governments have strict controls in place on both the information that teachers have access to in their classroom and regarding the kinds of lessons that they teach.

The curricula in a classroom can be divided into two parts: the visible curriculum of subject material that students learn, and the hidden curriculum which is the beliefs and values that are transmitted in the classroom from teachers to students.

Obviously it is fairly easy for your state to control the visible curriculum of subjects that students learn in your schools. There are several important factors that you need to consider when designing a curriculum for your schools:

1.) As much as possible, have a common curriculum throughout your nation. Leave little opportunity for communities or districts to customize what the students in their area learn. This will give you solid control over everything and does not allow specific populations of people or communities to emphasize things that may be important to them or meaningful for their students.

2.) Have solid boundaries in place between subject areas. Make sure that the students in your schools study each subject separately. Emphasizing each subject as a stand alone silo of knowledge will ensure that students find it more difficult to see the relationships that exist between things. This will also ensure that basic knowledge will form the majority of material that is covered in classrooms instead of the in depth study of more complicated topics.

3.) Be very wary about changing the subjects that students are able to study in your schools. Keep it basic. Reading, writing, math and science should form the cornerstones of what your students learn. New advancements in technology, science and math shouldn't find their way into your schools very quickly.

4.) Arts programs should be eliminated from your schools whenever possible. The study of art only allows people's thoughts to move towards freedom, beauty, and the condition of their lives.

5.) As much as possible provide the teachers in your classrooms with scripted programs for them to follow. This will ensure that you can have almost total control over not only what is studied, but what is said in your classrooms, the examples used and the problems that are solved. Make administrators or school inspectors responsible for strictly enforcing that these things are followed.

Advancing a certain kind of hidden curriculum in your schools is a more delicate balancing act. For your nondemocratic nation, the hidden curriculum should emphasize the power and unquestioning authority of your government. Teachers need to emphasize lessons which do not encourage innovative or creative thinking. Large amounts of content should simply be given out to students. Notes and worksheets should be used whenever possible. As much as possible, teachers need to control the work that is handed out to students. Students should, over time, acquire the habit of material being given out to them by people in positions of authority and power. They should have few opportunities to be creative or to investigate personally meaningful projects that revolve around their own interests and passions. Teachers should discourage entrepreneurial or social justice initiatives from taking hold in classrooms and schools.

5.0 STUDENT ASSESSMENT

School systems exist for a variety of reasons. When most Western nations began requiring parents to enrol their children in public school systems, it was done to assimilate large numbers of immigrant children into their societies. Your school system needs to focus on several straight forward goals:

1.) Indoctrinating the children in your society politically with the dominant theories of your nation.

2.) Giving them a certain amount of basic skills and content knowledge so that they can serve as useful employees to companies and as functionaries in your government.

Assessment and evaluation can basically be thought of as measuring the success of your students and the effectiveness of your teachers in transmitting the information that you want them to have. In more liberal countries, locally designed assessments and evaluations carry a lot of weight and power. Assessments that are designed within local classrooms and schools allow for individualization and personalization; goals that are simply irrelevant to your regime.

For your regime to retain its power, you must work to ensure that your national curriculum is closely followed and implemented in classrooms. This will only happen if the teachers who are required to teach it are monitored. This means that your experts will need to design and implement

a series of ongoing national assessments. Having a number of these that must be completed each year, and tying a portion of teachers pay packages and potential for advancement to the results of these tests will help to ensure that they closely follow your required program.

Having a number of assessments that must be followed each year will ensure that the teachers in your schools will work to align what they are teaching with the tests themselves. As well, having a tight timeline of tests that need to be followed will ensure that teachers have little time for reflection or innovation in their teaching; things that are not to be valued by your regime.

Success on national assessments should be promoted as being an act of patriotism. Schools should encourage rallies and special events before and during these testing periods. Teachers whose classrooms perform well on these tests and students who score highly should be lauded in the media of your nation and should receive great benefits for these accomplishments.

Schools should be under pressure to perform well on these assessments. Schools who do poorly should be punished by budget and material cutbacks. As well, administrators and teachers should be threatened with removal from under performing schools and teachers should be required to complete extra professional development courses reemphasizing the scripted programs they are required to follow in their classrooms.

6.0 INFORMATION

Information is key in any education system. Information in all of its different forms are the building blocks that your curriculum is created from. Many dictators correctly believe that education systems need to strictly control the information that is available in schools. It is vital that students do not have unfettered access to information and people around the globe. Make no mistake about it, providing unchained access to the internet and having skilled teachers who can lead students to deeply research questions they have can be a grave danger to your government. Information must be carefully controlled through a number of means.

In the past, publishing companies created textbooks, jurisdictions examined the different series that were available, made their choices, and then teachers would run their classrooms from these books. In our time, when people are desperate for educational reform, moving towards a system which includes a large amount of information technology in schools and classrooms has definite benefits over this older system. First of all, when they see their own children in schools equipped with the latest technology, many parents will feel that your government is working hard to ensure that their children will have the skills they will need for the future. Second of all, by moving in this direction, many companies (and their philanthropic executives) may want to become involved in the reform initiatives that are moving ahead and donate large sums of money to your education system in order to

aid the processes they believe are being undertaken.

Providing some access to information based on a number of conditions is important:

1.) Enable a strict content filtering system for every computer in your schools. Teachers and students should get used to the leaders of your government being in control of the information they can access. Your population should be convinced that your government has these filtering programs in place for the safety of their children. Constructing a network that enables you to control the information that students can gather, while appearing to allow them access, will allow you to control the flow of unsavoury and dangerous ideas to your students. You may even want to consider simply whitelisting some websites that are acceptable to your regime for your students to use.

2.) Ensure that the majority of your teachers are poorly trained in properly capitalizing on ICT for learning. Purchasing computers for schools and classrooms while providing teachers with little opportunity for training or dialogue on their proper use won't change much in your classrooms, while still giving the appearance of being up to date.

3.) Establish strong contacts and contracts with Western technology companies for the services that you need. Although many of them state in the news and even to their own governments that they are against filtering and the monitoring of internet use, most of them are willing to collaborate with any government given the right price.

4.) Ensure that your students use cloud based services to complete and store their work as often as possible. Establish these habits in your students while they are young and they will carry them forward throughout their lives. Of course, encouraging your students (and your population in general) to use these free online services is beneficial to you since one of the cornerstones of most nations is to completely monitor the communications of their citizens. If your students are using these services, it will give your intelligence agencies the opportunity to keep an eye on potential troublemakers early on.

7.0 TEACHER TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teacher training takes many different forms around the globe. In some parts of the world, these programs are very competitive and take only top students through an intensive combination of classroom learning, mentorship programs and apprenticeships. In other places, teacher candidates are run through boot camp style programs in the belief that life experience allows almost anyone to become a teacher. I would suggest that your nation grow a two tiered teacher education program.

In the first phase, you are going to indoctrinate a limited number of extremely dedicated and loyal lead teachers through an extensive and intensive program that emphasizes the glory of your regime and the power of

your vision for your society. These people will form the leadership of your system. They will serve as administrators, teachers and consultants, but no matter their capacity, you know that first and foremost, they will be loyal to your government and the goals you want to accomplish.

The second set of teachers that you will educate can be run through a program which will be much quicker. These people will be taught the basics of teaching, how to follow a program they will be provided with and be given tips for controlling a classroom filled with students. Of course, the majority of their program should emphasize the glory of your nation and the power and righteousness of its leader and all of your decisions.

Following this, place these new teachers in classrooms with little support and see who will do the best. Place all of them under close and tight supervision and give them little freedom to experiment with different types of content or methods of teaching. The administrators and consultants who worked through the longer program should closely supervise these teachers. As they are low paid and have no type of union or job protection, you can quickly rid yourself of those people who do not fit in with your educational philosophy. Expect to have to replace large numbers of these people who do not fit in your mold, but this turnover rate is acceptable since more of them can be quickly educated.

Teachers should be expected to complete a certain number of professional development initiatives in order to keep teaching in the classroom, but there should be limited topics that you allow them to study. This additional, ongoing professional learning in some nations serves as an empowering experience as teachers reflect on their lessons, the progress of their students, and work closely with mentors and other professionals on improving their methods of working in their classrooms. This is not what you want for your teachers. Instead, you want professional development programs that are focused on government mandated initiatives that you expect to be implemented in your schools. Keep teachers overwhelmed with testing and reporting requirements as well as with other general administrative duties and paperwork and they will have little time to reflect on their methods and how to improve them to become more innovative and effective educators.

Some of the professional development that you offer to your teachers should be political, but much of it should simply focus back on the programs that you are running in your classrooms. You need to ensure time and time again that teachers are closely following the scripted learning programs that you expect them to use in their classrooms. Professional development should be closely aligned with effectively delivering your curriculum and the government testing that takes place.

8.0 TECHNOLOGY

Other places in this guide have touched on the subject of using technology in schools, but the importance of this topic dictates that it requires an in depth look.

Computing technology has changed the world. Portable devices with vast amounts of information available at our fingertips as well as the ability to be in almost instant contact with masses of people around the world has empowered regular people to share the stories of their lives easily at virtually no cost. As well, technology has allowed the proliferation of technical information in most academic disciplines to take place relatively easily.

All of these things make technology dangerous for your regime. A well educated, empowered population who have access to, and a thorough understanding of, networked technologies is one of the most dangerous challenges you will face. They will be a constant force for change in your society.

On the other hand, a nationalized, carefully controlled and monitored internet can be one of the most valuable tools that your internal intelligence services can use to find and root out dissidents in your society. In the past it required legions of spies and surveillance equipment to carefully monitor what people were saying and doing in your towns and villages. In the present time however, things have changed, much to your benefit. Now, through a carefully designed system of partnerships with social media

companies, your regime can encourage your citizens to share the details of their lives online, their thoughts, opinions and dreams, allowing your internal security services to use advanced data tools to follow the details of the lives of each of your citizens. As the leader of a national education system, you can involve the students in your nation in the use of these tools early in their lives, encouraging them to share the details of their lives online. Forming these habits in the youth of your nation early will only be to your benefit later on.

Having access to networked tools has some advantages in education and should be encouraged. Partnering with specific technology companies will allow your students access to tools that you have carefully vetted and have the ability to monitor. The value and power of these tools cannot be denied. However, you must ensure that the information, connections and tools that are available for the staff and students in your schools is carefully controlled. Tightly restricted content filters should control the information that is available in your buildings. A constantly updated list of keywords being filtered should keep unsavoury information away from your impressionable students. As well, a set of technologists who are fiercely loyal to your agenda should ensure that only certain tools and apps are available to use.

Over the past number of years, the availability of software has changed. While there are still a number of large companies that produce huge profits from creating software products, other possibilities to access these tools now exist.

For example, most of the basic software that you will require for your schools can be purchased as stand alone products, but they can also be accessed from cloud or data service centres at very low or no cost to you. This type of software is easily accessed, used and controlled. It can also be easily monitored by the technologists who work for your government.

Unfortunately, an additional source of software has recently emerged. This is software that is considered to be be free and open source (FOSS). Free and open source software tools are often as good as those available from for profit companies and can be used to meet all of your needs. Unfortunately, FOSS software exists to be easily distributed and to spread the use of these advanced tools throughout societies. You must realize that for the health and stability of your regime, software poses just as much danger to you as a weapon. The ability to connect with others, create new content and deeply examine life in your place is a serious threat to you and the spread of these tools must be controlled.

Fortunately, many large technology companies have designed excellent tools lately and have created the mindset in technology users that all of their needs are being met. Ease of use has trumped all other factors in software design. Many people believe that using technology is simply writing the details of their daily lives in a small box and pressing a "share" or "like" button. This works in your favour and should be encouraged.

In the past few years, another movement has emerged that your internal security people must closely watch. Operating under a number of names, this "Maker" or "DIY" movement is encouraging people to learn to control technology themselves. This Maker movement encourages the use and spread of FOSS tools and they educate people on creating both software and physical products that will enhance the quality of their lives. Most dangerously for your regime though, is simply the fact that this movement is built on the philosophy of encouraging the free and open movement of information and on the mindset that technology and information can be created, shared and built upon by regular people who are not experts in their field. For example, one initiative of the Maker movement is encouraging people to learn to write computer code on their own. Once coding knowledge grows and spreads in your society, more advanced students will begin to investigate how they are being monitored and controlled. If they learn to access information from your government's servers and share this with other people in your society, this will place your regime in extreme danger. This movement must be rooted out of your society. The mindset that using technology to share the details of your life is not complicated but controlling and programming technology is obtuse, difficult and the domain of experts is important.

For all of these reasons, while using technology in your schools is an important initiative, you must carefully design and control these programs and the tools that are available for your students and staff to use. An overwhelmed teaching staff who have unreasonable expectations placed

upon them combined with low levels of training will be effective for ensuring that technology use remains at only basic levels among the population of your students.

Conclusion

Systems of education are present in every nation on earth. As the leader of a non democratic nation who is interested in retaining power as long as possible, you must understand that education systems are designed institutions that can be used to meet the goals of your regime. Not all education systems are equal for your purposes. Education is a two edged sword. You require your citizens to have academic knowledge about the world, but you do not want them to be encouraged to become intellectually empowered, curious and reflective of the life that they lead. Your education system should not be focused on empowering the individuals who take part in the life of your schools, but should instead be focused on maintaining the status quo.

Schooling is a dangerous enterprise in the networked world. Teachers and students who have the ability to cheaply and easily connect with others around the world pose a threat to your government. In the past, information didn't travel well and was much more easily controlled. In the age of the internet, you must have goals in mind for your system and well thought out policies that concern the control of computer technologies and the spread of information.

Information on the loose in your nation is as dangerous as any weapon. Many people in your position have not appreciated that fact and have paid the price for that mistake.

A system of education can be designed to meet your needs.

<u>From the Author</u>

I am a classroom teacher of twenty years who struggles with the design and organization of many of the world's current education systems. Our societies are in the midst of massive flux, existing in a rapidly changing world, but our systems change slowly.

I believe that education in a networked world should be very different from what it looked like in the past. It can be deep and powerful, allowing students and teachers to tell the stories of their lives, sharing who they are and connecting in unique ways with others around the globe. I also believe that we can have control over the tools that we use to do these things as we have never had in the past. FOSS tools allow us to create grassroots communities of learners who can connect in deep and meaningful ways. We can control our tools and our connections. We also have access to content, information and academic knowledge that we can use to benefit the quality of our lives and our understanding of others as people have never had in history.

Schools and educators are supposed to be about the business of building a better world. A more informed, safer world where we help students to enhance the quality of their lives through the time that we spend with them and the opportunities that we explore together.

Lets create spaces, buildings and systems that let us do that.

Much of the credit for the original idea for this work is attributed to Laurier Rochon who was the creator of The Dictator's Practical Internet Guide to Power Retention.

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