"The Rise of Neoliberal Techniques in US Higher Education: An Ellulian Analysis"

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To Jacques Ellul, education is an integral part of the technoculture, a technique itself geared toward developing a person prepared to function efficiently in service to that society. It is a form of sociological propaganda. It bears many of the characteristics of propaganda, not the least of which is that "both… are able to move the mass individual only by 'massifying' him more and more…" Education has nothing to do with the individual (development of character, satisfaction of spiritual yearnings, kindling of imagination, etc.) and everything to do with the mass, for the technoculture demands that the individual subjugate himself to the mass, not for his own sake, but for the sake of the technological society itself. The shared values of the technoculture – productivity, profit, speed, convenience, standardization, maximization, but above all *efficiency* – need to be internalized and assimilated if one is not only to survive, but to function properly and even, perhaps, "advance" in this sort of milieu.

While both the immediate and long-term goals of education are the assimilation of technical values and the adaptation of the young into the technical milieu, there is also a pragmatic, functional goal: not only to inure the human person to a dehumanizing and alienating environment, but to make him a single member of a mass of useful and productive workers within that environment.

Education as an adjunct to propaganda and an integral constituent dimension of the technological society has the additional benefit of reducing threats to the society posed by any unwanted outbreaks of individual, critical thought – a phenomenon that was once, in an earlier era, both an expected and a desired end, but in the technological society constitutes an existential threat to both the individual and the technological society itself

Ellul was, of course, by no means "against" education as a human institution. He was against the type of education *not* for the benefit of the individual, but for the benefit of technique. To be clear: there are two types of education to which we refer in this paper: that of mass inculcation of technical values, and some other kind of education. But what *is* this "other kind" of education?

Ellul never tells us. He calls our attention to the dangers of technological forms of education but reveals little of his thinking on what might constitute a suitable form. We must

envision our own conception of a healthy, personally, and spiritually fulfilling education by hearing only Ellul's descriptions of what it is not. "…[E]ducation no longer has a humanist end or any value in itself; it has only one goal, to create technicians." Therefore, education should be humanist rather than technical. But what would constitute a humanist education? "…[E]ducation issuing from technology [is] the absolute reverse of the culture conceived as: (1) the heritage of works, thoughts, traditions; (2) the continuous dimension of theoretical and critical reflection, critical transcendence and symbolic function." A knowledge of history, of the thinkers of the past, and of the transcendent narratives that rationalized their worlds seem to be part of Ellul's conception of a humanist education, along with the theoretical imagination, the development of critical thought and of values systems within which to make judgments. "No contrast can be tolerated between teaching and propaganda, between the critical spirit formed by higher education and the exclusion of independent thought." A "critical spirit," then, appears to be a goal of education. Finally, Ellul tells us that "Education and instruction no longer have anything 'gratuitous' about them; they must serve efficiently." So we can assume that Ellul also believes that a proper form of education is gratuitous – pursued not for any useful end, but for its own sake, not only an instrumental end, but an end in itself.

I conclude that Ellul believed that education should be a humanist process undertaken for its own sake, by a rational being, focusing on the human heritage of thought and tradition and subjecting these to the critical faculties. I'd like to call this a "liberal education." I think Ellul would not be uncomfortable with this label.

Roughly a century before Ellul, John Henry Cardinal Newman, in his *The Idea of a University*, anticipated Ellul's thoughts, differentiating between what he called "useful knowledge" and "liberal knowledge."

> Knowledge is called by the name of Science or Philosophy, when it is acted upon, informed, or if I may use a strong figure, impregnated by Reason. Reason is the principle of that intrinsic fecundity of Knowledge, which, to those who possess it, is its especial value, and which dispenses with the necessity of their looking abroad for any end to rest upon external to itself. Knowledge, indeed, when thus exalted into a scientific form, is also power; not only is it excellent in itself, but whatever such excellence may be, it is something more, it has a result beyond itself. Doubtless; but that is a further consideration, with which I am not concerned. I only say that, prior to its being a power, it is a good; that it is, not only an instrument, but an end. I know well it may resolve itself into an art, and terminate in a mechanical process, and in tangible fruit; but it also may

> fall back upon that Reason which informs it, and resolve itself into Philosophy. In one case it is called Useful Knowledge, in the other Liberal.[1]

Liberal knowledge, Newman tells us, is inherently good, an end in itself. Knowledge itself may be instrumental in the achievement of some goal, at which point it represents a source of power; but it does not have to be instrumental or aimed at some particular end in order to be considered knowledge, or to be valued in and of itself. What are the results of an education founded on the pursuit of liberal knowledge on the person who undergoes it?

> A habit of mind is formed which lasts through life, of which the attributes are, freedom, equitableness, calmness, moderation, and wisdom; or what in a former Discourse I have ventured to call a philosophical habit. This then I would assign as the special fruit of the education furnished at a University, as contrasted with other places of teaching or modes of teaching. This is the main purpose of a University in its treatment of its students.[2]

"And now the question is asked me," he continues, a hint of frustration in his words, "What is the use of it?[3]

Even in the late 19th century the dialectic between technique and *being* was not unknown – the dialectic between the immanent world and the transcendent one extends back in time at least to Plato – and the citizens of the burgeoning technological society were beginning to ask *What can I do with this knowledge? What good is knowledge that has no purpose? What is the meaning of anything that cannot be used to construct something greater?* Newman knew that liberal knowledge could liberate people from the external and constantly changing immanent pressures and demands of the temporal world and could open them to a more transcendent and permanent world of ideas and imagination, an interior world of questions seeking universal truth. But the technological society – even in its infancy – deals poorly with such questions.

> I am asked what is the end of University Education, and of the Liberal or Philosophical Knowledge which I conceive it to impart: I answer, that what I have already said has been sufficient to show that it has a very tangible, real, and sufficient end, though the end cannot be divided from that knowledge itself. Knowledge is capable of being its own end.

> Such is the constitution of the human mind, that any kind of knowledge, if it be really such, is its own reward.[4]

But this has to be a very unsatisfying answer to the technical mind, a mind that looks for problems to solve and solves them, a mind that dwells in a perpetual *here* and *now*, a mind that is constantly seeking "advancement" and whose very milieu is the world of the senses, the material world. Newman is unable to answer these objections – except to proclaim that the search for truth is a universal and permanent condition of the human spirit.

> Now, as to the particular instance before us, the word "liberal" as applied to Knowledge and Education, expresses a specific idea, which ever has been, and ever will be, while the nature of man is the same, just as the idea of the Beautiful is specific, or of the Sublime, or of the Ridiculous, or of the Sordid. It is in the world now, it was in the world then; and, as in the case of the dogmas of faith, it is illustrated by a continuous historical tradition, and never was out of the world, from the time it came into it.[5]

Throughout human history there have been many competing or sometimes complementary structures of education – formal/informal, oral/literate, concrete/abstract, rote memorization/critical thinking – but the duality identified by both Ellul and Newman in this case – practical/liberal – is implicated in each of those structures and is relevant to Ellul's criticisms of education in the technological society. One structure focuses on the material world as perceived by the senses – the immanent world – and orients us toward a particular goal or end of education: how to do something, and how to do it most effectively and efficiently. The other focuses on the immaterial world as experienced by the imagination – the transcendent world – and orients us toward profoundly different ends: the question of *why* we might do something, the consequences of our so doing (as opposed to doing something different or doing nothing at all), and the universal categories within which we might make our ultimate decisions. One is geared toward practicality and utility, the other toward questions of ethics. One education structure dwells firmly in the realm of material reality; the other in the realm of "things unseen." One orients us toward measurable values of efficiency, speed, productivity, cost-effectiveness, etc.

The other impels us toward immeasurable values of truth, justice, freedom, equality, and the good.

Having set what I believe is a sufficient conceptual foundation upon which to support my argument, I now present some recent political, social, and economic factors which underlie the problem I am about to describe.

Influential Factors External to the Problem

On August 23, 1971, Louis F. Powell (only months before becoming US President Richard M. Nixon's choice as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court) sent a "Confidential Memorandum" to a powerful friend in the US Chamber of Commerce, Eugene B. Sydnor, Jr. At the time, Sydnor was the Chair of the Chamber's Education Committee. In this memorandum, Powell described what he called an "Attack on the American Free Enterprise System" which had been underway, Powell claimed, for decades. The memo is notable for its cold war rhetoric as well as for what may be some of the first glimpses of the now-pervasive neo-liberal ideology. In the first few pages Powell identifies the parties responsible for this assault:

> The sources are varied and diffused. They include, not unexpectedly, the Communists, New Leftists and other revolutionaries who would destroy the entire system, both political and economic. These extremists of the left are far more numerous, better financed, and increasingly are more welcomed and encouraged by other elements of society, than ever before in our history. But they remain a small minority, and are not yet the principal cause for concern.[6]

This is almost boilerplate cold war, paranoid anti-communist rhetoric, which is no real surprise given the time it was written. But Powell goes on to name other groups and social institutions which, in the coming decades, would become familiar targets of establishment power:

> The most disquieting voices joining the chorus of criticism, come from perfectly respectable elements of society: from the college campus, the pulpit, the media, the intellectual and literary journals, the arts and sciences, and from politicians.[7]

Powell's resentment of this "attack" and his bewilderment over the groups and individuals engaged in it is palpable:

> The campuses from which much of the criticism emanates are supported by (i) tax funds generated largely from American business, and (ii) contributions from capital funds controlled or generated by American business. The Boards of Trustees of our universities overwhelmingly are composed of men and women who are leaders in the system.[8]

Powell's essential claim is that the American higher education system, along with the news media – particularly television – and, bizarre as it seems, government itself, is deliberately engaging in what we have seen Ellul call "propaganda of agitation" and is waging nothing less than a revolutionary campaign to bring down the free-market and subvert "the American way of life":

> A recent poll of students on 12 representative campuses reported that: 'Almost half the students favored socialization of basic U.S. industries'.[9]
>
> A visiting professor from England at Rockford College gave a series of lectures entitled "The Ideological War Against Western Society", in which he documents the extent to which members of the intellectual community are waging ideological warfare against the enterprise system and the values of western society. In a foreword to these lectures, famed Dr. Milton Friedman of Chicago warned: 'It is crystal clear that the foundations of our free society are under wide-ranging and powerful attack – not Communist or any other conspiracy but by misguided individuals parroting one another and unwittingly serving ends they would never intentionally promote'.[10]

It is notable that Powell cites Milton Friedman, the University of Chicago economist, in his memorandum. We remember Friedman as the conceptual father of supply-side economics, or "trickle-down" theory, and all that entails: minimal government intervention in the marketplace, deregulation of business, etc. The only truly "free" market, according to this view, is one unimpeded (unregulated) by government oversight.

Supply-side economic techniques have been a fitting adjunct to neo-liberal theories that see government as an intrusive and oppressive force, individual liberty the greatest good, private interests superior to the public interest, and competition for finite resources the natural state, not

only of the market, but of reality. Neo-liberals believe, among other beliefs, in a totally unregulated free-market within which the best – smartest, strongest, hardest-working, most prepared – will naturally earn their positions of prominence, wealth, and power.

The technological society is currently in the thrall of neo-liberal and supply-side techniques. These particular techniques, it must be said, fit quite neatly with the overall technical phenomenon. In a sense, the "best" human from the point of view of neo-con technique is the one who works most efficiently, is most productive, makes the greatest profit, etc. The best humans are useful and productive and support the overall goal and thrust of the technological system. The best humans have as their core values the values of the technological society – productivity, profit, speed, convenience, standardization, maximization, but above all *efficiency* – and will live by those values and make life decisions by those values. And we admire the best human beings and despise the rest – the useless, the unproductive, the wasteful, the indigent, the indolent, the effete, the hesitant.

"Government" itself is anathema to technoculture, or at best a momentary inconvenience and obstacle to its efficient operation. To the extent that government rewards efficiency, productivity, and profit (etc.) it is a tolerable silent partner to technique; to the extent that it "rewards" what appear to the technical eye to be indolence, waste, mismanagement and inefficiency, it is an obstacle. To the extent that government adopts and inculcates the values of technology, it offers valuable assistance; to the extent that it is founded on other values (compassion, for instance, or justice, or equality) it cannot but hinder technology's goals. To the extent that government sees itself to be in the service of technology, to aid its expansion, to assist in the maximization of its profits, to incentivize its productivity, to smooth its road to maximum efficiency, it is in synchronous movement with the technological society; to the extent that

government sees itself to be in the service of "the people," it is at cross purposes with technique and becomes an enemy that must be removed.

We must keep these things in mind when considering Louis Powell's memorandum warning of an "attack on the American free enterprise system." It is, in fact, a defining document of both neo-liberalism and the technological society.

"Although origins, sources and causes [of the "attack"] are complex and interrelated, and obviously difficult to identify without careful qualification," Powell writes, "there is reason to believe that the campus is the single most dynamic source."[11]

> The social science faculties usually include members who are unsympathetic to the enterprise system. They may range from a Herbert Marcuse, Marxist faculty at the University of California at San Diego, and convinced socialists, to the ambivalent liberal critic who finds more to condemn than commend. Such faculty members need not be in a majority. They are often personally attractive and magnetic; they are stimulating teachers, and their controversy attracts student following; they are prolific writers and lecturers; they author many of the textbooks; and they evert enormous influence – far out of proportion to their numbers – on their colleagues in the academic world.[12]

Powell takes great care to sound an objective tone in this document (also frequently referred to as "the Powell manifesto"), but one is tempted to say that it is the objectivity of a mind deeply embedded in the values of technique.

> Social science faculties (the political scientist, economist, sociologist and many of the historians) tend to be liberally oriented, even when leftists are not present. This is not a criticism per se, as the need for liberal thought is essential to a balanced viewpoint. The difficulty is that 'balance' is conspicuous by its absence on many campuses, with relatively few members being of conservative or moderate persuasion and even the relatively few often being less articulate and aggressive than their crusading colleagues.[13]

Powell's ultimate argument is that the US system of higher education was, at that moment in history, creating a generation of Americans who hated capitalism, sometimes even to the point of violent revolution. He quotes then-Newsweek columnist Stewart Alsop writing, of his alma mater, "Yale, like every other major college, is graduating scores of bright young men…who despise the American political and economic system."[14] Powell continues:

> As these 'bright young men', from campuses across the country, seek opportunities to change a system which they have been taught to distrust – if not, indeed 'despise' – they seek employment in the centers of the real power and influence in our country, namely: (i) with the news media, especially television; (ii) in government, as 'staffers' and consultants at various levels; (iii) in elective politics; (v) [sic] as lecturers and writers; and (v) on the faculties at various levels of education."[15]

Lewis Powell, of course, was not the only conservative in the United States of the 1960s and 1970s who had concerns about the direction of the country or the tenor of social, political, and economic debate. Americans had only recently watched televised images of black citizens, marching in peaceful protest for their rights, being brutally beaten by southern racist police officers. The civil rights movement was one of the first televised popular movements in history, and it was populated in part by student-activists from American colleges and universities. Campuses became a focal point for debate about – and protest against – segregation and racial prejudice.

A decade-long war in Vietnam, televised into US households on a nightly basis, had lost the support of the American public; with that support went some of the fervor of anti-communism that had been characteristic of the post-war American experience; napalm attacks, sometimes hitting innocent civilians and children, weakened public support further, and even put US industry under intense scrutiny (Dow Chemical was the manufacturer of napalm). Never before had US foreign policy been viewed so negatively by American citizens; and they viewed that policy on television. Never before had US foreign policy been so hotly contested and debated by American citizens; and they debated that policy on college campuses.

Along with the civil rights movement and the anti-war movement, the feminist movement, the gay rights movement, the environmental movement, the Latino movement, the various student movements (Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, Students for a Democratic Society, etc.) all gave evidence to an *increased public awareness* of injustice,

inequality, and exploitation. It was an opening up of a highly controlled information system, and an occasion of high *entropy* for the American public. One could argue that this may have been a good thing for democracy. It was certainly a bad thing for technique.

The US power structures were shaken by the events of the 1960s and 1970s and were in a state of reactionary panic. The cold war still raged. The Soviet Union had recently achieved nuclear parity with the United States. Americans were marching for civil rights, protesting against the war, and questioning anti-communism and the corporate influence of the military. What appeared to be a genuinely individualist strain of democracy seemed to be emerging from the remnants of the bland, mass-manufactured homogeneity of the 1950s. Something needed to be done to restore balance, predictability, and certainty.

Powell made several specific suggestions about what the Chamber could do to bring the American people back to a level of satisfaction with and support for the previous status quo. The first was to hire a "staff of scholars" who would be available to speak on campuses, or to counter negative information in the mass media:

> The Chamber should consider establishing a staff of highly qualified scholars in the social sciences who do believe in the system. It should include several of national reputation whose authorship would be widely respected — even when disagreed with.[16]

Then there would also be a staff of speakers "of the highest competency. These might include the scholars, and certainly those who speak for the Chamber would have to articulate the product of the scholars."[17] This would be supplemented by a USCC Speaker's Bureau, "which should include the ablest and most effective advocates from the top echelons of American business."[18]

Among the more troubling suggestions is the external (outside of the academy) evaluation of textbooks. The goal, Powell claims, would be to restore "the balance essential to genuine academic freedom."[19]

> This would include assurance of fair and factual treatment of our system of government and our enterprise system, its accomplishments, its basic relationship to individual rights and freedoms, and comparisons with the systems of socialism, fascism and communism. Most of the existing textbooks have some sort of comparisons, but many are superficial, biased and unfair.[20]

Academics know that, rather than "restoring" academic freedom, such a policy is a direct threat to genuine academic freedom. This is, in fact, censorship and the humble beseeching of *imprimatur*, only from the technoculture rather than an ecclesiastical hierarchy. There may also be something of a subtle threat to the pocketbook here too:

> If the authors, publishers and users of textbooks know that they will be subjected — honestly, fairly and thoroughly — to review and critique by eminent scholars *who believe in the American system*, a return to a more rational balance can be expected.[21] (my emphasis)

There is so much subtle (and blatant) red-baiting at work in this memo, so many aspersions cast – indirectly at the very least – at academics other than those *who believe in the American system* – in other words, those who wish to look at the technical system objectively and without bias – that it is hard to believe that Powell was not composing a piece of satire. But he was not; he was deadly serious. And that's the point. The technological society, as Ellul tells us[22], is its own ideology; it is total and totalitarian. It is *the one true way;* there is no other. It is a system of total redundancy and negative entropy. One either *believes* in Capitalism/the American system/free markets/technique or one doesn't. To fail to be in full agreement is to be in disagreement, to fail to fully support is to actively oppose; to fail to love is to hate. And this cannot be tolerated.

"Perhaps the most fundamental problem" Powell continues "is the imbalance of many faculties."[23] Powell is bracing the Chamber to prepare for a long battle, more siege than war, one that will be expensive and time consuming and will make demands on all the resources they have at hand. It is time to put pressure on administrators and boards of trustees and alumni associations, calling them, writing them, visiting them[24] to make sure their institutions are giving

"*the right information*" to their students, information that will help them to *believe in the American system,* information that will bring them into conformity with the values of technology.

We are lately being told that a transformation is under way in American Higher Education. This transformation is explained by two major factors, both central to the neo-liberal worldview: 1] cuts in state support for higher education, and 2] increased competition from non-traditional educational institutions. Universities have become dependent on tuition due to decreased external funding. Nearly half of the national average institutional cost of educating a student is paid for by tuition, up from 23.8% in 1988. Roughly 71% of all US graduates finish their schooling in debt; their average indebtedness rose to $29,400.00 in 2012 and to $32,731.00 in 2020 – an increase of more than 30% over the average indebtedness of $23,450 in 2008. In 2020 the total US student loan debt was $1.56 trillion. The burden this places on young people is crippling and poses serious challenges for them. Furthermore, the addition of new technologized education platforms has only exacerbated the situation by drawing students away from traditional colleges and universities, making those institutions even more tuition dependent. In alarming rhetoric, we are told that academia is in an existential crisis which demands executive action without regard to the wishes, needs, or aims of faculty.

University administrators across the country have thus introduced with surprising consistency sets of policies that contain several curiously similar items: the elimination of tenure, diminution of faculty's role in shared governance, the remediation of "curricular stagnation," an increase in (faculty) productivity, the control of costs, etc.

I choose not to question immediately the need for greater institution-wide productivity or the control of costs. Indeed these are critical issues for the survival of higher education in the US; just not in the same way, or for the same reasons, as argued by those who now rule higher education.

I argue that US higher education has adopted a neo-liberal "free-market" model of higher education, a top-down structure of bosses and workers, a commoditization of information mirroring the technoculture, which focuses not on the needs of students as citizens and people,

but on the culturally derived desires of students as consumers and future functionaries of the technoculture. Its key is Total Quality Management.

TQM is a free-market administrative technique that arose in US industry in the 20th century and has, in the last three decades, been applied increasingly more frequently to higher education. Its core characteristics include the following: 1] the imposition of a top-down approach to management, 2] a view of higher education as a "service industry," 3] of students as "customers," and 4] of "an education" as a "commodity."

TQM is predicated on several "key principles":

1] **Customer focus**.

From the point of view of TQM, the student is a customer in a competitive education market. Universities are service providers, and faculty and staff are employees. Administrators become *managers* charged with implementing TQM. The human and humanistic is replaced by the mechanical and technical.

2] **Total employee involvement**.

"Work teams" and committee service are horizontal propaganda techniques for the vertical imposition of manufactured consensus.

3] **Process-centered**.

To what "processes" are the TQM theorists referring? Are they the critical intellectual processes that we're trying to get our students to develop? Or the "manufacturing" process wherein we "intake" customers and "output" them as graduates? Or the vision of "quality management" inherent in completely technologized "course delivery systems"?

4] **Strategic and systematic approach**.

More faculty time and energy is now dedicated to administration-mandated assessment, measurement, documentation and adherence to the strategic plan, across disciplines. Faculty, then, have less time to spend on curricular development and course preparation and management; they need to work longer hours to accomplish the same pedagogical goals they previously pursued; their research agenda and/or scholarly work suffers.

5] **Continual improvement**.

"Improvement" is another vague and problematic word. In the technoculture, change is frequently (if not always) seen mistakenly as "progress." Not all change, of course, is

improvement. And when the focus of change is "meeting customer expectations" in a free-market environment, the university will more and more come to resemble the economic milieu. Dynamism and change – two characteristics of the larger technological society – are thus integrated into the university.

For the purposes of this paper I wish to focus on what I believe is the one most significant – and troubling – aspect of TQM in higher education: the idea of the student as "customer."

To see a student as a customer is a very different thing than seeing a student as a human being in the process of self-formation. Such a view assumes a fully formed consumer, prepared to make market choices from among a variety of commodities – in this case choices that likely will have profound consequences for the rest of the person's life. In this context the idea of personal discovery disappears, as does the sense of interior investigation or exploration. The student's immediate judgment of what is and is not "relevant" is based, prematurely, on an incomplete data set founded on a rich lode of messages manufactured by the technological society. The result of the "student as customer" stance has been the transformation of higher education from an academic experience based on individual learning, inquiry and self-discovery into a mass-marketed social and recreational experience based on consumption and the values of the technological society.

To respond to the demands of the student, it is necessary to adopt further market techniques, as it is in the nature of markets to be not only dynamic, but frequently volatile. Curriculum and pedagogy are no longer important factors in educational "quality," nor is the quality of faculty scholarship. What becomes important is the professor's ability to create new courses quickly based on topical trends, without regard to whether those courses will be meaningful in the future or add anything of value to the student/customer's life.

Recruitment and retention rather than curricular integrity become key areas of administrative attention, and many colleges have embarked on non-academic construction programs to provide entertainment and leisure activities to address the demands of student/customers in a competitive market. Food courts, spa-like athletic facilities, and elaborate performing-arts centers have become increasingly common on college and university campuses. Since the 1990s, US colleges have been engaged in a "building boom" with higher education construction spending doubling between 1994 and 2015, peaking at $15 billion in 2006 and leveling off at $11 billion in 2015.

Much construction work has focused on sports facilities, since student "customers" also seem to want to go to a school with a big, formal athletics program. We witness a dramatic increase in spending on athletics in US colleges and universities in recent decades, averaging roughly 30%. Average spending per full-time equivalent student-athlete increased nearly 48% between 2003 and 2011. During academic year 2011–12, public two-year colleges spent $467 million on athletics. Private four-year institutions spent $5.002 billion, and public four-year colleges and universities spent $8.337 billion. That's a lot of money.

The fact is that college athletics *is* a business, seen by many as a money-making one at that. However, a far greater proportion of a college's budget per full-time equivalent student is spent on athletics than on academics – about three times as much in an NCAA Division I school, as much as six times as much in an NCAA Division I school with a football team with bowl game qualifications. The cost of these programs drains resources that would otherwise go to teaching and learning.

This is a problem for US students and their families. The fact is that the decline in state support for higher education has been more than offset by increases in tuition. The average total tuition, fees, room and board rates charged for full-time undergraduate students in degree-granting institutions rose roughly 210%, from $11,138 in 1985-86 to $23,835 in 2017-18.

This is not a partisan issue. "Enrollment at America's leading universities has been increasing dramatically, rising nearly 15 percent between 1993 and 2007," according to the (very conservative) Goldwater Institute. But "higher education has not become more efficient. Instead, universities now have more administrative employees and spend more on administration to educate each student. In short, universities are suffering from 'administrative bloat,' expanding the resources devoted to administration significantly faster than spending on instruction, research and service."

As education adopts a free-market model, it is inevitably managed according to free-market principles, and the very idea of *shared governance* is seen by many as Marxist anathema. The top-down management/labor model is by its nature more confrontational than collegial. And it is here, I believe, that we find the most destructive consequences of free-market technique. In the system of higher education characteristic of the technoculture, the management class proliferates and access to meaningful information and communication at the institutional level plummets.

Without the explicit consent of faculty, non-academic administrators and staff begin to outnumber professors and departmental clerical staff. Is there any way to imagine that these changes have constituted *improvements* in US higher education?

What benefits have we seen in higher education as a result of the introduction of neo-liberal free-market techniques? What have the costs been? From an Ellulian point of view the answer to the first question is a qualified "yes, there have been benefits." There has been a business expansion resulting in the creation of jobs and the accrual of power in academic boardrooms and executive offices.

But at the same time, what has the cost been to higher education, particularly to the humanistic or liberal view of education? We can't be certain, but we have some clues. Free-market technique and the values of the technoculture have undoubtedly played a role in increasing costs. Competition, marketing, and the elusive goal of "quality" take a toll not only on "customers," but on faculty, staff, and the educational experience itself. The managerial class ascends, the "customer service" and technical classes follow, and teaching faculty become little more than an afterthought.

In conclusion, I want to propose some basic principles that I believe are fundamental to whatever resistance may, in the future, arise against free-market education techniques. They are:

1] Recommit to tenure. Without it, meaningful shared governance is impossible. No one afraid for their job will risk incurring the ill-will of administrators by disagreeing with their *diktats*.

2] Recommit to shared governance. Presidents, administrators, and trustees must listen to and consider the views of faculty. Merely holding "town hall"-style meetings where everyone voices their own idiosyncratic concerns and consensus seems impossible, and then making unilateral, top-down decisions is a poor replacement for actual shared governance.

3] Protect curricula from the volatile pressures of the free market. If any curricular change is considered, it ought to be in *opposition* to the pressures of the market rather than in support of it. Curricula are and must remain the jurisdiction solely of teaching faculty.

4] Commit to genuine administrative transparency. Publish University operating budgets – both in the future and retroactively. Administrators should be held accountable for their decisions and should be subject to evaluation and review as a condition of contract renewal.

5] Reduce administrative payrolls to the extent that there exist redundancies in administration and/or new administrative departments not directly connected with academics. Bring administrative salaries into conformity with equivalent faculty and staff salaries.

6] Recommit to having the majority (or more) of classes taught by full-time faculty rather than adjuncts.

7] If an audit of a university's operating budget supports such a move, end organized athletics programs and replace them with informal intramural team sports.

8] Recommit to the idea of the university as an educational institution dedicated to the formation of enlightened, critical, and curious young people, not as an adjunct to the market. Invest in resources that directly impact student learning.

Increasingly, "education" is another word whose meaning is fluid and dependent on who is using it and what their intentions are. It's up to actual educators, however, to define the word, and I'm hopeful we'll define the word in such a way that it liberates our young rather than preparing them to be effective, productive, and efficient functionaries of technique.

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[1] Newman, John Henry. 1925. The Idea of a University Defined and Illustrated. London: Longmans, Green and Co., pp. 111-112.
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[8] Ibid., p. 3.
[9] Ibid., pp. 5-6.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid., p. 12.
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[13] Ibid., p. 13.
[14] Ibid., p. 14.
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[16] Ibid., pp. 15-16.
[17] Ibid., p. 16.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid., pp.16-17.
[20] Ibid., p. 17.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ellul (1965) op. cit., pp. 194-96.
[23] Powell (1971), p. 19.

[24] Ibid.