

SHALL WE WAKE UP OR CONTINUE SLEEPING?

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By Viken L. Attarian MSc, MBA October 7, 2007

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There is NO place for a publicly funded faith based private education in any liberal democracy because it goes against the fundamental secular principle of separating religion and state. Either we live in a secular state or we don't. There is no in-between. If we do NOT want to live in such a state then we should perhaps question ourselves as to what is it that we want? Armenian traditional organizations will go on ranting again about fundamental family values (cloaked Christian fundamentalism) or how multiculturalism should be used to preserve our identity (motherhood statements).

No one actually realizes that there is only ONE non-secular Christian state. It is called THE VATICAN. Modern liberal democracies whose freedoms Armenians enjoy were FORMERLY Christian states that have gone through about a 1000 years of soul searching, warfare, murder and killing of their own brethren before they started to realize what the intellectuals have been advancing all along: that religion (like sex) is a private and personal matter only.

Perhaps Armenians would like to live in a country like the Vatican.

What we should be arguing for is publicly funded linguistic and cultural (not faith based) private schools which will fully implement the public curriculum and add to it the cultural elements necessary to preserve our identity and language, but simultaneously to open us up to the rest of the world.

In other words, we need to do a serious rethinking of our curricula in our schools.

Finally, in a much related matter, I would like to say this: Multiculturalism is about breaking down walls among communities, not building them up.

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