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## Confucius Is Turning in His Grave

The acceptance of the Chinese government's Confucius Classrooms is an act that "places profit before morality" - unfortunately this is already an unconscious acceptance of Communist values.

Ever since release of the SMH article Behind Confucius Classrooms, the Chinese government agency teaching NSW school students on 29 May 2016, major Chinese media outlets have translated and reported this article with many positive and negative commentary in a spectacular display of democracy at its best.

In order to verify the facts, a journalist interviewed Scott Smith, executive member of the Chinese Language Teachers Association of NSW Inc., who summarised the following:

1. the so called "Confucius Institute" does not have anything to do with the actual Confucius philosopher. None of the textbooks or classes teaches Confucianism. The name was used simply because he was the greatest teacher in Chinese history.

2. The main reason schools have signed contracts for Confucius Classrooms is due to \$10,000 funding by the Chinese Communist Party together with free assistant teachers and materials. There is money plus teaching resources, why not?

3. Confucius Institute teaches Chinese language, with no political motives.

4. Any sensitive topics to the Chinese Communist Party are omitted during class, such as Taiwan.

Do we really believe that \$10,000 per school from a foreign government can solve NSW Department of Education's funding problems? As part of this Confucius Classroom exchange, many principals and teachers may have been invited to visit China for education and cultural exchanges. During this visit, did they go to any remote Chinese villages? Many families in China can barely afford RMB75 a year to send their children to school. If the NSW Department of Education knew there are still hundreds of thousands of children in China who cannot receive an education due to dire financial situations, would they consider giving back the Chinese government's donation of \$10,000 per school so that these children in China can receive a basic education?

Confucius was a great pioneer in China's education system. He taught us that everyone is entitled to an education, no matter your social or financial status. The Chinese government today may think that children in Western countries have more entitlement to study Chinese than the poorest children in China; to all those Confucius Classroom fans out there, what do you feel when you stand in front of a Confucius statue? Can your conscience be bought by merely \$10,000?

In terms of Mr Smith's explanation that Confucius Classrooms only teach the Chinese language, this is a very superficial understanding of our Chinese culture. The Chinese characters being taught are those that have been altered by the Communist Party. The term "China" has also been changed to only mean People's Republic of China. Is the Republic of China (Taiwan) mentioned at all? When children are dancing in front of the red Chinese flag, have teachers given consideration to the other blue Chinese flag still flying in Taiwan? How would children from Taiwanese families feel? Unfortunately for the Chinese people today, traditional Chinese characters and culture can only be found in Taiwan.

Australian educators are not worried about the infiltration of Communist values, however, the acceptance of the Chinese government's Confucius Classrooms is an act that "places profit before morality" - unfortunately this is already an unconscious acceptance of Communist values.

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