COMMUNIST-SOCIALIST
PROPAGANDA IN
AMERICAN SCHOOLS

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A documented study of the role National Education Association is taking in the indoctrination of the youth of our country with the ideology of Communism-Socialism.

BOSTON
MEADOR PUBLISHING COMPANY
PUBLISHERS
DEDICATION

To all my teachers —

Those noble Christian men and women who, during the years of the decades spanning the turn of the century, strove mightily to guide a reluctant scholar into the paths of learning; and, by precept and example, pointed the way to an upright Christian life, this little book is respectfully and lovingly dedicated. Not once did any one of them hint to me or my classmates that it is silly to believe in spiritual things because science has wiped out all reason to believe in any such foolish notions. Never from one of them did I get as much as a tiny suggestion that the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution are sham documents, craftly drafted to cement the power of wealth over the poor and downtrodden of the nation. All these teachers have removed to places unknown to me, or, as is more likely in the case of the majority, have gone to their rewards. But they live on, in my heart.
Communist-Socialist Propaganda in American Schools

I

FOLLOWING THE COMMUNIST-SOCIALIST "LINE"

So-called and self-styled progressive educators occupying policy-forming positions within National Education Association, and its divisions and departments, have not hesitated to use the exact language of the Communist-Socialist movement in describing their social-economic aims, and in urging teachers to indoctrinate youth of the land for acceptance of socialist ideology and programs. The aims of these false leaders, of course, are identical with the immediate program of Communism-Socialism.

The declaration, "Without social and economic democracy, political democracy is a hollow sham," is typical Socialist party lingo. Perhaps more often it is stated from the positive view, that social and economic democracy are necessary to make political democracy really effective.

As quoted in the preceding paragraph, the declaration appears on Page 73, first page of the chapter "Obstacles to Democracy and Freedom," which is Chapter VII of The Improvement of Education, Fifteenth Yearbook (1937) of the Department of Super-
intendence, which is the American Association of School Administrators.

Only two major organizations in America, American Civil Liberties Union and American League Against War and Fascism, "are devoted to specifically warring upon Fascism," it is declared on Page 90.

American Civil Liberties Union is a fringe group "sparked" by Roger Baldwin. It has been called a Communist front by many government agencies, though it has escaped such designation by the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

Not so the American League Against War and Fascism; this League has been recognized from the outset and by all agencies as Communist-inspired and Communist-operated, strictly for Communist Party purposes. Earl Browder served as vice-chairman until, when its reputation got so "smelly" that it no longer was proving effective, the League changed its name to American League for Peace and Democracy.

Incidentally, Earl Browder, for so many years secretary of the Communist Party, a position he held at the time this book was written and published, is referred to in the book, Page 83, as an "able and restrained radical." (Browder had been Party secretary since 1930, and its Presidential candidate in 1936.)

In this chapter under discussion, seven statements are quoted from the writings of Stuart Chase, or documented from his writings, this bibliography including his *The Economy of Abundance*, in which Chase reveals himself as a Socialist.

Other statements in the chapter are quoted or documented from writings of the pro-Communists George Seldes and Arthur Kallett, and the well-known Socialists, Norman Thomas and Carl D. Thompson.

Bewailing the fact that the Socialist Party shows
little strength in American elections, and that the Communists appear even weaker as vote-getters, the authors find there is no "immediate hope for radicalism in the labor movement."

The authors explain that the farmers are unpredictable, following moderate radicals in times of depression, but voting for conservative candidates when times are prosperous. And as a final blow to immediate hope for radical developments, the authors mourn:

The great white-collar class of clerks and professional men and women is highly conservative in its outlook and tends to identify itself psychologically with its masters and with the economic interests of the latter.

America has no class system, and when the intelligentsia of the teaching profession speak of a "white-collar class," they are aping the European Socialist terminology. This is true also when employers are referred to as "masters." One might suppose that the classroom teachers of the nation, who surely are "professional men and women," would object to being classed as subservients of the "masters," but no protests or objections are of record.

Further cause for discouragement is found by the authors in the passing of liberalism in England, "killed by the World War." They express the fear that "even moderate socialism seems likely to go the way of liberalism," but the note of somber despair takes on a militant spirit as the authors see the Soviets pointing the way to better things:

It (moderate socialism) had an unparalleled opportunity at the close of the World War, but almost everywhere it has broken down before the
onslaughts of Fascism. It may be that it is unfair to blame Socialism for this debacle of Socialist governments, but it cannot be denied that the prestige of Socialism has been vastly impaired by the collapse of the Socialist regimes in Italy, Germany, Austria and other countries. At the same time extreme socialism, namely revolutionary communism, has gained enormous prestige as a result of the conspicuous success of Soviet Russia in the face of almost unprecedented difficulties. (Page 85)

In the chapter section on “Pressure Groups and Democracy,” the authors, chosen spokesmen of the American Association of School Administrators, spew their venom at an even longer list of patriotic organizations than was presented by Prof. Howard K. Beale in the 1937 yearbook of the National Council for the Social Studies. (See Chapter “Progressive Education ‘Exposes’ Propaganda” of this book.)

Like Professor Beale, the school administrators express extreme repugnance for “compulsory flag exercises and instruction in the legends and pageantry of the flag,” military training in schools, compulsory teaching of history, and examination of textbooks. The declaration is made (Pages 76 and 77) that militaristic organizations seek “to intimidate or oust pacifistic or realistic teachers.”

The spokesmen for the administrators are to be complimented upon their frankness of two points, (1) their frank admission of the close relationship between Communism and Socialism, and (2) the implied admission that there has been no move to oust teachers merely “on suspicion,” but rather only those who admittedly are “pacifistic or realistic.”

Frankness again breaks out all over our authors
when they pen Chapter VIII, "Processes of Social Change." This present writer has been studying radical literature for more than forty years, but does not recall a more exaggerated or more bitterly phrased statement of the "failure" of our American way of life. Communists, Socialists, Technocrats and other "planners" have told us that we could shorten the work week and at the same time increase our standard of living. For nearly two decades we have been hearing repetition of the outrageous slander to the effect that one-third of our population is ill-fed, ill-clothed and ill-housed. But these planners and critics are veritable Mister Milquetoasts as compared to the official spokesman for the AASA. Read from the opening paragraphs of Chapter VIII:

It is no exaggeration to say that in the United States of America today, with our marvelous technological equipment and our still abundant natural resources, we could produce, in not more than thirty hours of work per week for every able-bodied male and employed female in the country, all the goods, food, shelter, and services that the American population could use on a high standard of living. Thirty hours of work is probably too high a figure. We might well meet our needs in twenty hours of work.

We could produce all the food needed on about one-fifth of the land and with about one-fifth of the farmers now involved in agricultural pursuits, provided we introduced the latest and best-known methods. . . . Yet over half of the American people, even in so-called prosperous times, go about inadequately clothed. Millions of them live in hovels and detestable slums. Even in 1929 three-fourths of the American families could not purchase for themselves a minimum health diet,
while nine-tenths of them were not able to obtain a liberal diet.

Of course our authors have a remedy, "social change" in our day to take up this lag—this slack—and to create a social system harmonious in efficiency and ideals with our technological evolution." And we had better get on with it, and fast, for:

If we do not bring our social system up to the level of achievement which we have attained in our material life, then our material life will revert to the more primitive and archaic character of our social system. This will mean the death of approximately half of our present population, for certainly a technology as outmoded and inefficient as our social system could sustain no more than half of the existing population.

Cultural lag as well as social-economic "slack" stand in the way of progress, our authors say. They mix the two rather indiscriminately in their discussion:

Our ideas of property came, for the most part, from the days of John Locke or before. Our constitutional system is based upon the adoption, a hundred and fifty years ago, of a mistaken conception of the British system of government made by the French philosopher, Montesquieu, two generations earlier. Our basic legal concepts, so closely linked up with property, derive from the natural law philosophers of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. Our criminal jurisprudence is of even earlier origin.

Our social ideals are in a large part a heritage from European feudalism—even, in part, from the ideals of primitive chieftains—adapted to the
rewards and culture of an industrial age. Religion is still based upon supernatural assumptions and other-worldly considerations. Morals are purely a derivative from this supernaturalism and partly a protective device for the economic wrongdoings of the leisure class. Education transmits, for the most part, the traditions of a preindustrial age and the notions of a scarcity economy. Above all, we proceed upon the assumption that our economic life should be conducted for the profit of the few rather than for the service of the many.

The usual Communist-Socialist "fear technique" is applied in furtherance of the effort to get something like unanimous consent to a program of "gradualism." Our authors mince no words:

There are two possible methods of social change. One is orderly and gradual change, dominated by information and directed intelligence. The other is that violent change which we call revolution, based upon exasperation and desperation, motivated by hatred of oppression, and all too often guided by deep emotions rather than by informed intelligence. . . .

The present capitalistic and nationalistic social system has been supplanted in but one place—Russia—and that change was effected by revolution. Hence the verdict of history would seem to indicate that we are likely to have to depend upon revolution for social change of an important and far-reaching character. . . .

That there was so little bloodshed in the Russian Revolution was due to the fact that the World War had all but paralyzed the old regime, and the nobility and middle class which had to be overcome or liquidated were not relatively numerous.
It is difficult to see how the authors could have made it plainer that the Utopia of the Communist-Socialist movement is their social-economic objective, and that they are not averse to revolutionary methods if they prove necessary or advisable for accomplishment of the aim.

This position was not new in 1937. It had been "announced" at NEA's annual meeting in 1934, as is noted in the Introduction of this little book. It was full-fledged in the Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence the following year. This Yearbook was published under the title Social Change and Education. In a chapter titled "A Preface to a New American Philosophy of Education," John L. Childs, who had been superintendent of schools at Holden, Mass., since 1916, voiced these sentiments on Pages 137-138 in the following:

Confronted with a rapidly changing economy, American educators cannot serve the youth of our country by continuing to make them intellectually and emotionally loyal to many of the doctrines contained in our traditional social philosophy....

Enough data are now available ... to show the general direction in which we must go. Industrialism points to national social planning. Our national ideal of social democracy requires that this planning be under collective control. Collective control cannot be made a reality in a regime of private ownership of the basic industries. Undoubtedly we can learn much from the experience of other countries, particularly Russia, but we ... need not prematurely assume that collective planning and dictatorial bureaucratic regimentation of social life are necessarily corollaries.
It would of course be more scholarly and more realistic if the superintendents of instruction would accept the fact that it is no premature assumption that any planned economy must be based upon bureaucratic control. If society (government) is to plan for people, attempting to guarantee that individually and collectively they will enjoy the “good life,” then government must plan the lives of its citizens in minutest detail.

Of course our so-called progressive educators scorn the lessons of history, but this is most unwise; the future can be predicted only on the basis of what has happened in the past, and history has shown that government control over the lives and actions of its citizens progresses almost exactly in proportion to the “advance” toward “total planning.”

Finally, returning to the philosophic approach, when a government has assumed ownership and control of the “means of life,” which are the processes of production and distribution of goods and services, it has become totalitarian—nothing in the realm of material things remains for it to seize—and by definition and in practice, a totalitarian government is based upon the ultimate in bureaucracy.

For example, if government is to arrange for production of all necessary agricultural products with one-fifth of the land and one-fifth of the labor now devoted to this field of endeavor, which is declared possible by our authors, as noted earlier in this chapter, certainly the planners must have in mind the abolition of the one-family farm and introduction of collective farming on a stupendous scale, with agricultural labor completely “militarized” and moving from place to place and job to job at command of an agricultural “authority” with limitless powers.
In this same Yearbook of 1935, Prof. Jesse H. Newlon, director of Lincoln School, Teachers College, Columbia University, since 1927, voiced typical Columbia viewpoint of acceptance of the Marxian class struggle theory. The following quotation is from Pages 159–160 of the chapter, "The Teaching Profession and Social Policy:"

In considering the problem of how teachers may actively participate in shaping social policy in community, state, and nation, we are confronted by two basic facts. Notwithstanding that teachers have long looked forward to a classless society, our society is still divided into classes that are becoming more sharply differentiated.

Further developing its views on the education of youth "for democracy," the Department of Superintendence devoted its Sixteenth Yearbook, 1938, to subjects indicated by the title, Youth Education Today, prepared by the department’s Commission on Youth Problems.

The authors show concern for family and other influences touching the lives of youth, these naturally including various types of youth organizations, such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts; church, municipal and fraternity-sponsored groups; agricultural groups such as 4-H Clubs, Future Farmers and Junior Grange; organizations sponsored by the Federal Government, and finally, purely commercial projects such as movies, road houses and pool halls.

Results of several “surveys” are included. One of these indicates the authors’ distrust of adult-sponsored and directed groups such as are included in the classifications named in the preceding paragraph. State directors of the National Youth Administration were
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asked to report the extent of self-motivated youth organizations.

Twenty-five directors reported that they knew of no such organizations, and a number cited such organizations as Four-H Clubs and other groups which actually are adult-directed. And finally:

Only thirteen (directors) cited examples of what might really be termed self-motivation, such as local youth forums, orchestras and community groups. The American Youth Congress was mentioned by eight of the thirteen directors as being an active youth organization representing youth initiative.

These reports were passed over without further comment; presumably they were accepted as factual and realistic. Whether this be considered the result of ignorance, indifference, or acceptance of the aims and purposes of the American Youth Congress, the result is the same: the reader is led to the assumption that the Congress actually was a youth-motivated organization with worthwhile aims.

The truth, as explained in the chapter "Building America" of this present book, is that American Youth Congress, as it operated from 1934 to 1941, was described by the House Committee on Un-American Activities as "one of the most influential front organizations ever set up by the Communists in this country." The Congress, of course, was youth-motivated only to the extent that it was managed and directed by the Young Communists, who, in turn, were directly under the strict control of the Communist Party.

To this point it has been shown that official spokesmen for National Education Association follow the Communist-Socialist "line" in many ways, including
use of the exact terminology of the Marxists; praise of Socialism and of Socialist policies and organizations; ridiculing patriotic organizations; deprecating achievements of the American way of life on the one hand and making absurdly exaggerated statements of what could be accomplished under a Communist or Socialist regime; making claims that the coming of collectivism in some form is inevitable, and using the "fear technique" to persuade people to accept "gradualism" and "peaceful" change as the only way to avoid violent and bloody revolution.

Only a few of the Communist-Socialist techniques involved in the process of following the "line" are mentioned in the preceding paragraph. More of the methods used in "following the line" will be pointed out, and documented, in the following chapter, "Using Communist-Socialist Techniques."
II

USING COMMUNIST-SOCIALIST TECHNIQUES

No technique of the propagandists for Communism-Socialism is more satisfying to its users, or more effective in preparing the minds of both adults and young people for acceptance of the Marxian ideology, than the “debunking” of American history, which includes gross misrepresentation of the character and aims of the Founders and of the historical documents which they wrote.

Following through with disclosure of National Education Association “exploits” in this “debunking” and other use of Communist-Socialist techniques, is no more than continuation of documentation of NEA practices in following the Communist “line,” discussed in the previous chapter.

Other Communist-Socialist techniques used by NEA spokesmen include praise of Soviet “accomplishments” and apologies for Soviet brutality; teaching the Marxian doctrine of class struggle, in part by sly insinuations that American society is made up of classes; teaching that “change”—always, of course, in the direction of collectivism—is not only inevitable but desirable, and using crude Communist tricks to make it appear that Communism-Socialism is the only antidote for Fascism, with Communists and Socialists presented as the only true anti-Fascists.

For some examples of the use of Communist-Socialist techniques mentioned above, centering around