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## Education On Communism

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EDUCATION ON COMMUNISM - SOME MISCONCEPTIONS

May I say at the outset that I am privileged, as well as duly impressed, to appear on this program between Dr. Richard L. Walker and Admiral William C. Mott. Both of these gentlemen are nationally known as gifted speakers and genuine experts on the Communist movement.

When I have previously spoken on the need for education about Communism I have usually been able to assume - with some confidence - that much of the audience had to be convinced. But here in Florida there is little need to seek converts. I am among congenial spirits, and in a state which has demonstrated its full awareness of the immediacy of the Communist threat.

There is much in common between the record of the American Bar Association and the Florida Bar in the



assumption of responsibility on this subject. Although the ABA has had a committee on Communist Strategy, Tactics and Objectives for more than a decade, it is fair to say that the Florida Bar was among the first to recognize the duty of lawyers to encourage and support appropriate education in the schools on Communism. As early as 1955 your Committee on American Citizenship, working with the State Department of Education, published a superb essay on the Meaning of Communism. This was presented by your Bar, in a series of lectures, to thousands of students in Florida schools, and in 1958 it won a coveted Freedoms Foundation award.

1961 was an eventful year, as both the ABA and the Florida Bar took significant action which attracted national attention. The ABA House of Delegates, in February 1961, and after careful study and consultation with educational authorities, unanimously resolved to:

"Encourage and support our schools and colleges in the presentation of adequate instruction in the history, doctrines, objectives and techniques of Communism, thereby helping to instill a greater appreciation of democracy and freedom under law."



Three months later, in May 1961, the Florida Legislature enacted a law requiring the teaching in all high schools (by September 1962) of a course of not less than 30 hours on "Americanism v. Communism". I am frank to say that I had some misgivings about legislative action in this area. In light of my own experience on the School Board in Richmond and as a member of the Virginia State Board of Education, I felt that the determination of curriculum content should normally be left to the educational authorities. Boards of education, especially with the public support which bar leadership can assure, will usually take appropriate action, and they will do so with greater enthusiasm and conviction if there is no legislative mandate.

But I am happy to say to you today that the Florida plan seems to have worked out extremely well. Your State Department of Education, under the leadership of Superintendent Thomas D. Bailey and his associate Fred W. Turner,\* deserves high commendation for the

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\*Fred W. Turner, Florida's Americanism v. Communism Course, Florida School Bulletin, September 1962. (This is an excellent article on the Florida program and also contains constructive suggestions as to the teaching of this course).



manner in which they have implemented the legislative plan. The Resource Unit prepared for teacher use is one of the most effective instructional aids on this subject which I have seen. You have acted wisely and broadly to provide the in-service training for the teachers which is so essential.

Your leadership here in Dade County, under Superintendent Joe Hall and Director of Social Studies, Madeline Brown, has also been exceptionally able.

Although it is perhaps too early for definitive judgments, I understand that your course has been received with enthusiasm by parents, pupils, school administrators and teachers. This has certainly been the situation in Richmond, where we have had a unit on Communism in our high schools since 1961.

As recently as early 1961, when the ABA adopted its resolution and your Legislature acted, the question then being debated (and by relatively few voices) was whether there should be instruction in depth on the subject of Communism. The extent of the progress in the past two years is indicated by



the fact that today there is a fairly broad consensus, both among educators and the public, that this subject should be taught in our schools. This progress has been due in no small part to the leadership of the organized Bar, both at the national and state levels. Your Bar here in Florida has every reason to be proud of the constructive role it has played, and your leaders in this work (Reg Williams, Jack McKay, Sam Powers and George Baker Thomson - to mention only a few) have rendered a conspicuous public service.

As you in Florida have been in the vanguard of this movement, there is no point in my tendering advice as to the role of the organized Bar. You have already demonstrated what a vigorous Bar can accomplish, and your example is an inspiration to the rest of the country.

I will now mention, quite briefly, what the ABA Committee is doing this year under the brilliant chairmanship of Morris Leibman. The primary thrust of the current program is to encourage the in-service



training of teachers. A syllabus has been prepared, under Dr. Walker's direction, for use by colleges and universities offering summer institutes for the training of teachers. Although Dr. Walker was too modest to characterize this syllabus, I am free to say that it is scholarly and definitive, and will be a unique contribution in a field which has heretofore been largely neglected.

The ABA Committee, with the assistance of its program dedicated/director, Frank R. Barnett, is also broadly active (i) in encouraging and assisting colleges in setting up summer training institutes, (ii) in providing nationally known speakers for such institutes, (iii) in conducting seminars for lawyers (such as our program here today) and (iv) in cooperating with state and local bar associations to advance education about Communism and its contrast with liberty under law.

Perhaps the best indication of the success of the ABA Committee's work is the fact that Foundations, in less than two years, have donated or committed a total of \$200,000 to our program.



Now, having briefed you on what the ABA is doing, I would like to devote the remainder of this talk to certain misconceptions which appear to exist - happily, I believe, on the part of a relatively few people only.

First, there is the fear that courses on Communism will be "indoctrination" or merely "anti-Communist propaganda" rather than genuine education. For example, the Director of the American Civil Liberties Union was recently quoted as voicing concern about "the campaign" to teach courses on Communism in the schools.\* Others of similar persuasion have been quite articulate - in the press and elsewhere - in viewing all of this with alarm.

Is there in fact substantial justification for this concern? The term "indoctrination", as here used, means teaching which distorts or conceals the facts and which is intended to inflame passions and prejudices rather than enlighten and educate.

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\*Richmond News-Leader, March 29, 1963.



It seems to me that those who believe that indoctrination in this sense is a serious problem simply do not have confidence in the American educational system. We are talking about courses of instruction in the regular curriculum of our schools and colleges. These courses will be taught by professional teachers who are jealous of their right and duty to teach with independence and objectivity. Moreover, the leading textbooks on Communism (and happily a number of these are now available) have been written by qualified educators or nationally known experts on this subject.

These "viewers with alarm" not only seem to lack confidence in our school teachers, but they also underestimate the independence and tough mindedness of our young people. American students would be the first to resent indoctrination courses.

At the other end of the thought spectrum is the minority who fear that these courses will weaken or even subvert the loyalties of our youth to the



American system.\* Mr. Allen Dulles has given a short answer to this misconception. He has said:

"We should not be afraid to teach the subject. A history of Communism and all of its works would bear its own indictment of the system. Let the facts speak for themselves."\*\*

There is also some misconception as to whether factual and objective teaching precludes evaluation or moral judgments by teachers. William C. Sullivan, Assistant Director of the FBI, and a wise and experienced expert in this field, has recently said:

"In teaching about Communism, accuracy and objectivity are essential. But these do not require that teachers suspend all value judgments on the meaning of facts about Communism. Does objectivity, for example, require history courses dealing with World War II to refrain from any value judgments on the nature of Nazism, its military aggression,

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\*A proposal by a legislative committee in South Carolina that this subject should be taught in the schools has been attacked by right wing groups. Charlotte Observer, April 26, 1963.

\*\*Allen W. Dulles, Address before Veterans of Foreign Wars, Detroit, August 22, 1960.



and its inhuman extermination of Jews? Does objectivity demand that we attribute equal values to both freedom and tyranny?"\*

Mr. Sullivan's reference to Nazism touches upon another interesting point. One rarely hears any expression of concern as to the lack of objectivity in teaching about the tyranny of Nazism. As Morris Leibman has suggested, there is a "myth" - with considerable credence in some circles - that Communism is morally superior to Nazism. In a recent speech demolishing this myth, Mr. Leibman asked:

"Are the sealed box-cars in Hungary - the graves of Katyn Forest - the genocide in Tibet - the planned starvation in the Ukraine - (are these) 'morally preferable' to the bake-ovens of Dachau?"\*\*

There is indeed little to choose between Nazism and Communism, except that the latter is far more dangerous because of its seductive intellectual

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\*William C. Sullivan, The Need to Teach About Communism in Our Schools, Address before New Jersey Council of Education, March 8, 1963.

\*\*Morris I. Leibman, Address in Town Hall, March 6, 1963.



appeal and its world wide conspirational operations.

No teacher should hesitate to condemn both of these tyrannies. It would be as wrong for teachers to suspend value or moral judgments on them as it would be to distort or falsify facts.

Teachers must also do some interpreting. Communists use a language deliberately designed to deceive and mislead, and they have been remarkably successful in doing just that. Our teachers must themselves fully understand this "Communes language" and other techniques of Marxist-Leninist deception. One of the purposes of these courses is to assure a far higher level of sophistication about Communism than we have heretofore possessed. The history of the last 20 years has tragically demonstrated how little the leaders and people of the West have understood the Communist movement.

Still another argument sometimes made against courses of instruction on this subject is that they exaggerate or overemphasize the danger from the



Communist movement at a time when Communism is in a process of "liberalization." It is asserted that the Soviet Union, in particular, is moving closer toward genuine peaceful coexistence - if not, indeed, towards harmonious membership in the family of civilized nations.

This type of fuzzy thinking has persisted for many years, varying from time to time in accordance with the extent of Communist pressure. Those who profess to see a mellowing of the Communist movement have been rationalizing this view for some 40 years on the discredited theory that the Communist revolution is essentially like other revolutions in history, and will in due time run its course. This view is currently nourished by arguments and hopes based on (i) the more "liberal" internal policies of Khrushchev as compared with Stalin's mass brutality, (ii) the ideological differences between Moscow and Peiping, and (iii) the belief of some that the Cold War has diminished in intensity.



This line of thinking was especially prevalent following the Cuban crisis last October. There was a new period of relaxation, reminiscent of the false hopes engendered by the "spirit of Geneva" and "Camp David". Khrushchev's tactical retreat, and conciliatory attitude after being caught red-handed, were viewed by some as proof of Communist moderation and desire for genuine peace. While this soft-headed thinking is not surprising among "ban the bomb" and other left-wing groups, it is disquieting to observe the extent of relaxation - by some Americans as well as our NATO Allies - which followed the confrontation of last October.

Those who believe there has been a significant change in the character and purpose of the Communist movement have misread the lessons of history. In an article in Foreign Affairs last fall, Bertram Wolfe said:

"For four and one-half decades, we have waited for the Soviet Union to mellow.  
. . . A review of the judgments of statesmen and analysts over these 45 years makes melancholy reading."\*

\*Bertram D. Wolfe, Communist Ideology and Soviet Foreign Policy, Foreign Affairs, October 1962.



Mr. Wolfe then goes on to demonstrate, quite conclusively, I think, that there is no similarity between the Communist and other revolutions, and that those who imagine they see an amelioration of Communism are truly seeing a mirage. As Mr. Wolfe points out, "Marxism-Leninism is a combative ideology;" its "essense is struggle" - with flexibility of tactics and inflexibility of long range objectives; and, in this protracted struggle, constantly waged by the Communists against the free world, "the most dangerous periods are those of comparative relaxation".

For our fellow citizens and allies who have chosen to feel optimistic in the present period of "comparative relaxation", it might be informative to take a look at the actual record of Communist conduct - all since the doctrine of "peaceful coexistence" was proclaimed by Khrushchev. The following examples should suffice:



1. The resumption by the Soviet Union of nuclear testing, despite its solemn word to the contrary.

2. The intransigence of the Soviet position on inspection, which has frustrated all efforts toward disarmament.

3. The undeclared war in South Vietnam, where 12,000 American troops are already committed.

4. The necessity for some 50,000 United States soldiers in South Korea, 10 years after the so-called armistice.

5. The erection of the Berlin Wall and the continuing program of strengthening the Iron Curtain.\*

6. The certainty that the Berlin problem will again assume crisis proportions.

7. Soviet perfidy in moving its missiles secretly into Cuba, and (despite its October promises to President Kennedy) the subsequent consolidation there of a major Soviet base.

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\*For a remarkable book on the Iron Curtain and what we should do about it, see Overstreets, The Iron Curtain, W. W. Norton & Co., New York, 1963.



8. The Communist betrayal in Laos - an event widely predicted by those familiar with the fate of coalition governments.\*

These are but a few of the more spectacular examples of the realities which underlie the false facade of Communist "peace" and "peaceful coexistence".

And to those who derive comfort from the family squabble between the U.S.S.R. and Red China, Khrushchev himself, as recently as April 21, 1963, gave a blunt warning. Calling this "an internal affair of Communist parties", he said:

"If the imperialists (meaning, the western powers) dare to undermine the peace and security of the socialist countries, they will knock against the unified power of the peoples of the Soviet Union and of the Peoples Republic of China. . . .\*\*

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\*Commenting on the Loatian crisis, the New York Times (April 20, 1963) said: "The world is being treated to the spectacle of Communists brutally violating international agreements and seeking ideological and territorial expansion by force of arms." There is little reason to believe that Mr. Harriman's recent trip to Moscow has changed this situation.

\*\*Interview of Khrushchev with an Italian editor, as reported in the Washington Post, Monday, April 22, 1963.



In the same interview, Khrushchev must have disenchanted some of those who imagine they see some lessening of the Cold War. In denying any such possibility, he said:

"We Communists never have accepted, and never will accept, the idea of peaceful coexistence of ideology. On this ground there can be no compromise."\*

It will be remembered that Communist ideology expressly sanctions "wars of liberation" as well as the full Communist arsenal of propaganda, sabotage, subversion and revolution.\*\*

It seems to me that it is time for the free world to accept Khrushchev - and other spokesmen for Communism - at their word. They have repeatedly made it clear, by word and deed, that there will be no change in the basic objectives of the Communist movement. They intend to inherit the earth and to liquidate their enemies - by whatever methods seem

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\*Interview with Italian newspaper editor, New York Times, April 22, 1963, p. 12.

\*\*Dr. Charles Malik, the distinguished Lebanese scholar, has said: "It is impossible to have any peace with the International Communist Party." Address, Virginia State Bar Association, July 6, 1962.



most expedient at the time. The Cold War is therefore certain to continue - perhaps with growing intensity.

All of this suggests that the ABA program is a sound and necessary one. It is sound and desirable educationally - regardless of whether the Cold War subsides. In view of the harsh realities of our time, this may well be a necessary program if our system of government and freedom under law is to survive the Communist menace.

It must of course, as the ABA has insisted, be a program in education, formulated and implemented by established educational authorities and the teachers in our schools and colleges. The role of the Bar is to encourage, assist and support. The ABA has full confidence in the integrity and independence of our educators and teachers, and we earnestly invite our friends from both the "right" and the "left" to share this faith and confidence in our American educational system.



We also invite them to put aside their fears and misconceptions about this program, and to concentrate on the real enemy of freedom everywhere - the international Communist movement.

And now a final word. It must be appreciated that the full impact of this program is necessarily long range. Education is a slow process at all levels. Indeed, the lead time of programs initiated in the schools today must be measured in terms of a decade or more. But our only hope of winning the Cold War is long term. Nuclear war is a real and ominous possibility. Most Americans had rather be "dead than Red", but one must believe that these are not the only alternatives. There is a third course which America can and must pursue, namely, ultimate victory in the contest between Communist tyranny and our system of freedom under law.

Education has a vital role in assuring this victory. In a democracy, the people as well as the leaders must possess the requisite knowledge and understanding. This means, of course, not merely



knowledge of the Communist movement nor, indeed, merely knowledge of our own system of freedom under law. The great, overriding need of our perilous time is for that breadth of knowledge and wisdom which is obtainable only by free men with free institutions. This is the goal of the American Bar Association and of the Florida Bar. It is a goal to which all Americans can aspire.

Lewis F. Powell, Jr.