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CZECHOSLOVAKIA

EDUCATION

Educational Problems, Sovietization

Textbooks

YOUTH

Students

ADAPTATION OF STATE SCHOOLS TO COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY.

SOURCE ROME: From a report by a Czech teacher on the efforts made by the Communist regime to conform the Czech schools to the Marxist-Leninist ideologies.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Fall 1951

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1) TEACHING METHODS

In a "motion" published in PRAGUE on 17 June 1951, the Central Committee of the Czech Communist Party bitterly criticized the faults of the contents and methods of the textbooks:

".....which give little stress to the Soviet scholastic experiments and are based on the compromise the authors would like to make between Leninism-Stalinism and the previous reactionary age....."

In the defense of Marxism-Leninism no compromise whatsoever with the doctrines of bourgeois thought is admitted; no pliancy whatsoever in the field of principles....."

Recently the members of the "J.A.Komensky" Institute for pedagogical research in PRAGUE, were mobilized to work on the new directives for the Czech schools. The nature of these directives can easily be deduced from the long "Report" published in the semi-official review "Pedagogika" (no.3-4, 1951:)

"....Our teachers - the report says - have a just understanding of the struggle for peace in our schools, a struggle for better results of school education, which leads to friendship with the people and the youth of the Soviet Union, of the popular republics and the German Democratic Republic.....Our teachers learn the methods of the Soviet teachers.

It is necessary that they abandon all that was introduced into our schools by bourgeois pacifism and served in defiling our schools of the First Republic.....They must beat the false humanism of MASARYK and teach the pupils to love the Soviet Union, the Communist Party, Klement GOTTFELD and STALIN more and more....."

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"In choosing literature, the teachers must be concerned about inculcating love for the country, a growing love of the Czech working classes toward the peoples of the Soviet Union, as well as a passionate hatred against her internal and external enemies....."

(See "Pedagogika," no. 3-4-, 1951)

To reach this goal it is necessary to teach history and geography of foreign countries in the most convenient manner.

As far as geography text-books are concerned, this is what the "motion" of the Central Committee of the Communist Parties of 17 June 1951 says:

"....The present illustrations are embellishing life in the capitalist countries too much; they show their panoramic beauties, their technical progress, but they do not show the right aspect of capitalism, they do not denounce the terror and misery in which the working classes are living in those countries....."

With regard to history, however, following are the directives given by GOTTWALD Klement himself:

"....The Czech history is a living reality based on the struggle of the classes, the control of the reactionary forces, as well as a progress and the eternal struggle of the Czech people the unjust and exploiting power of the dominating classes....We exalt the historical significance of the Soviet Union in conserving the liberty of the Czech people and for the victory of the working classes....."

The following norms are given in the report of the "J.A.Komensky" Institute for the teaching of the History of Czechoslovakia:

".....in illustrating the birth of the Czechoslovak Republic, we must show that the Czech Revolution of 1948 would not have been possible without the Soviet Bolshevik Revolution...and we must stress that MASARYK sided with the bourgeoisie against the workers, and that BENES tied the Republic to the Western Powers in a front against the Soviet Union...."

With regard to the history of the Czech Communist Party the report declares:

"....that it is necessary to put special stress on the epoch when GOTTWALD Klement was the head of the Party, and to the period prior to MUNICH, when the Czech Communist Party efficaciously tried to face the Nazi danger by itself.....The history of the Czech Communist Party, contemporaneously is the history of the growing love of the working classes for the peoples of the Soviet Union and for the great STALIN....."

As to the personalities of the Czech history who are to be especially praised, John HUS is to be given special attention. His works are to be particularly recommended in the schools because of their anti-Catholic contents. And in fact, this is what the report says:

"...The most glorious epoch of the history of the Czech people is that of John HUS. The Hussites led a just war against the intervention of the Crusaders....."

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As to the teaching of natural sciences, of physics and chemistry the report determines:

"....that they must take as example the Soviet sciences, which are in all fields based upon the results of Soviet progressive science and especially on the biology of MICURIN and the physiology of PAVLENKO...."

In the teaching of physics and chemistry it is necessary to unite theory with practice, in such a manner that - as Comrade STALIN said - theory will light the way to practice and practice will give theory its contents....."

"It is, therefore necessary to organize workshops in the schools, where the pupils will be able to be trained as apprentices, carrying out work strictly connected with the subjects of physics and chemistry and at the same time also with life and the tasks our Socialist regime...."
(See Pedagogika, No.3-4, 1951)

2) NEW SUBJECTS OF TEACHING

In lieu of the classic subjects, which were abolished in the scholastic programs, the Ministry of Public Education introduced the study of the Russian language, Soviet history, literature and geography.

The new directives do not make a distinction between "Russian" and "Soviet" and, in conformity with the tendencies noted in the USSR herself, not only the study of contemporaneous Bolshevik writers is suggested, but also the study of the writers and scientists of Czarist Russia.

The report of the Komensky Institute says:

"....Soviet literature is the most ideal and progressive literature of the whole world. In order to approach Soviet literature in the most extensive way, it is necessary to teach the pupils the Russian language most energetically and to introduce to them the works of the Soviet writers and of the Russian classics, such as PUSKIN, TOLSTOI, GOGOL and TURGENIEV.....The works of LENIN, STALIN and Klement GOTTWALD have already a great educational influence in the schools...."

Also the study of Russian history and Russian geography must be done thoroughly, as it results from the directives of the "motion" of the Czech Communist Party of 17 June 1951:

"....The history of Russia must be studied alongside the history of Czechoslovakia....Then, in order to be able to gain a deeper understanding of the history of the Soviet Union, it is necessary to introduce also films and plays, apart from the special literature...."

One whole schoolyear in secondary schools must be dedicated to the study of the geography of the Soviet Union, the indestructible country of victorious Socialism, whose heroic people are changing the face of the world and building up Communism...."

3) SCHOOL AND POLITICS

The part reserved for politics in the Czech Communist schools can be deducted from several observations and norms contained in the above - quoted Review "Pedagogika":

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"....After the victory of February, the active enthusiasm of our people penetrated also into our schools and conquered the pupils and teachers...Pupils and teachers are fervidly taking part in all the brigades and meetings.....

It is not necessary to add that these brigades and meetings are obligatory and that absences must be justified. The children have to belong to the "Pionyr" organization and, the older ones, to the Youth Union. The pioneers are being trained to "take part directly in the work of constructing Socialism" and to offer their work to the various initiatives of the Party.

And following are the directives contained in the same review *Pedagogika* with regard to the education of the youth:

"....It is necessary that the youth be cautious and watchful in order to be able to defend the work in which it is taking part.... Let us teach our youth to distinguish the enemies who can no longer exploit the work of the people....let us teach our youth how to unmask the saboteurs and destroyers who with their wicked words want to endanger our efforts in the construction of Socialism. To educate thousands of beings who are watching over a common work is a high contribution of the schools in the struggle for peace. In our schools we must create centers of agitation and propaganda for the struggle for peace....."

(See *Pedagogika*, nos. 3-4, 1951)

Also the spare time of the pupils must be filled with occupations and amusements. Conferences, special lessons, etc, are provided for by the same review *Pedagogika* for the purpose of "sustantializing the youth with a love for their popular democratic country and the Soviet Union and exciting them with the idea of the struggle for peace. Contrary to the capitalist schools, which teach the youth to hate man, it is necessary to impress upon our youth sentiments of solidarity and fraternity with the heroic fighting Korean youth, with the oppressed youth in the capitalist countries, with the youth in the popular democratic countries and above all with the Soviet youth, the shining example of our children...."

(See *Pedagogika* No. 3-4, 1951)

EVAL.COMMENT: The report, which appeared in "*Pedagogika*" is UNCONFIRMED here and not available.

However, whole subject in line with Communist methods of reeducation of youth.