

Fairy Tales, Rags To-Riches Sagas To Be Eliminated From Children's Books In Soviet Satellite Nations

By DEWITT MACKENZIE
(AP Foreign Affairs Analyst)

The Russian satellite nations of eastern Europe are undergoing an educational metamorphosis which bids fair to change their entire outlook on life and take them still further from western thought.

The satellite governments are busy overhauling their school systems to make them conform with the communist ideological teachings laid down by Moscow. Czechoslovakia, for example, is engaged in eliminating from children's reading all such frivolities as rags-to-riches success stories—and the fairy tales which for centuries have fascinated youngsters the world around.

In place of such material the small folk are getting textbooks which give a new and "genuine" outlook. Even such success stories as that of Henry Ford are banned, on the grounds that it was "an exploiter of the working people."

The significance of this revolutionary change is pointed out in an article by educationalist Jozef Barbag in the Warsaw "Trybuna Ludu," organ of the communist-dominated Polish United Workers' party. He says schooling is to be linked more closely to political, social and economic life. It is to be based upon the ideology, education and methods of Marxist-Leninism.

To glorify Russia Barbag declares that special emphasis will be placed on subjects concerning the soviet union "with its leading role in the world, its achievements in the field of science, technology, culture and art." He continues:

"The tendency of our new school programs is to introduce the fullest possible information about the soviet union in the lowest school grades, while the new school programs will also show on the basis of facts the character of Anglo-Saxon imperialism, its anti-social tendencies and its negative and destructive role in every sphere of life."

In short, Moscow is in process of remodeling civilization, which will regard Russia as the parent nation of the world.

However, that gets us into rather deep water. What really started me off was the idea of depriving the youngsters of their fairy tales and other cherished literature out of which have grown the dreams of childhood. Being well aware that I could be wrong in my outlook, I was glad when my colleague David Taylor Marke, AP Newsfeature specialist on education, dropped by my desk. I asked him how American educators felt on this subject.

"The primary contrast," he said, "is that in the United States we are trying to meet the needs of children, whereas in Russia

they are trying to meet the needs of the state."

A child should not be encouraged to read before the age of six because his eyes are not ready for near-point concentration, and he may damage his vision, according to some eye specialists.

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