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Teaching About Communism

The State Board of Education recently approved a course of instruction concerning Communism. We view the action with mixed feelings.

It is right and proper that every young person in this country know about Communism, both the theoretical variety which has never been practiced, and the actual variety, which poses such a threat to us, militarily and ideologically, in international relationships.

Also, it is right that this information be provided in the schools, with skilled instructors who are able to put things in their proper context.

IT IS this last point which concerns us a bit. By singling out Communism, of all the doctrines and beliefs, current and past, in which mankind has been involved, do we not run the risk of putting too much emphasis on Communism?

Could such emphasis tend to create in the minds of impressionable students that this is an all-black-and-white world; that all the answers are known; that all the facts of history and political science and economics are indelibly on file?

The answers to these questions depend, in large part, not only on how skillfully the course has been prepared, but perhaps even more important, on the knowledge and ability of the teacher whose task it is to present it.

IF COMMUNISM is presented, in a special course, as the one great and overriding issue of our times, then the presentation is wrong.

If, however, it is presented as one facet in a many-faceted history of humanity; if it is shown in context, with its origins and development and relationship to other ideologies clearly delineated; if it is described clearly and accurately, and without a simplistic black-and-white orientation—if these things are done, it will be of great assistance to the student in understanding the world of today.

The student must be made to understand that the world of today is in a process of change and flux, and that it always has been. Today is not static; tomorrow will bring something new.

A SHORT 20 years ago we were allied with Soviet Russia in a fight for survival against Germany and Japan. Today we are allied with Japan and part of Germany, and our Cold War opponent is that same Soviet Russia.

And what will tomorrow bring? No one knows. Twenty years from now the world's alignments could be as drastically revised as they have been in the last 20 years.

Communism, if the truth is known, is today little more than a label, and means just what the person using the word wants it to mean. It is, in differing contexts, an economic and political system (which varies with time and place), or a set of beliefs and attitudes (which differ sharply in different parts of the world, and from time to time).

Communism is not the same in Russia as it is in China; not the same in Cuba as in Czechoslovakia; not the same in Albania as in Poland.

IF THE student can be made to see and understand these complexities, he will be better able to find his way in today's world.

But if he is instructed that Communism is monolithic, huge, threatening and implacable; that the only choice before us is total victory or total surrender; that we cannot expect any of today's facts of life to change, and that we must look forward to centuries of ideological strife along the lines of today—if he is taught this, he will be short-changed.

The danger of teaching about Communism in the schools is not that the student might become indoctrinated with the hated ideology; the danger is that too much emphasis on it, outside of the whole matrix of a complex world, may give him a warped and fearful and fatalistic attitude.

And that would be too bad, both for the student, and for the society which looks to him for enlightened leadership in the dangerous but challenging years ahead.—E.A.

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Judgment At Moscow



Communications

Letters to the Editor must bear the name and address of the writer, although under certain circumstances the use of a pen name or initial for publication is permissible. The Mail Tribune reserves the right to edit all letters with a view to clarification and condensation. Letters submitted for publication must not exceed 400 words. The letters printed in this column do not necessarily represent the views of the paper. In fact the contrary is often the case.

Tortured Souls

To the Editor: The editorial of June 7 concerning racial prejudices was soothing to the eye after reading the letters of Miss Morrow and Mr. Clifford, in which they stated their belief in color superiority. Mr. Clifford's letter was particularly disturbing because of his use of awe-inspiring government statistics. The potency of these figures rapidly diminishes, in this case, when it is understood that these figures can also be applied to the standard-of-living level of the states, and more specifically, to the quality of their educational facilities.

These persons no doubt sincerely believe that they have sufficient reason for believing as they do. Negroes are, as a whole, less educated. The majority of them do have personality problems, mostly as a cover-up for the feelings of inferiority developed in them during many years in which traditional prejudice was practiced by their white neighbors day in and day out. A large majority have very poor personal habits—their cars are dirty, their homes are run down. The biggest complaint is their conduct in public, for here, of course, is where contact is made between the two races.

But granting all these faults to the Negro is granting nothing save the fact that millions of human beings are living in an environment which makes them so embarrassed and self-conscious in public that they strut and shout and push like anyone would, white or black or tan, who is being tortured by an over-powering, constantly-nurtured inferiority complex. If nothing else is learned in the twentieth century, this simple psychological truth should be.

The difference between the two racial groups is that this personality problem occurs infrequently in the more-secure white community, and is thus seen in scattered, individual cases, while it is so common to the colored race that it appears to be a racial trait. If those persons arguing for racial supremacy have not yet completely closed their minds to argument, it would do them no harm to consider not only the what's and when's and how much's, but also the why's. If in the end they still think that the white race is superior and that the social problem of the Negro is simply due to racial inheritance, then they should take an additional step, one which a superior individual might do, for quality lies not in color, but in action. Be ever so kind to these tortured souls.

Frank D. Long, 1090 Ellendale dr., Medford

Please, Kids To the Editor: Not many years ago, the cigarette companies thought of clever little sayings for women, such as: "Reach for a Lucky instead of a sweet," and "I'd walk a mile for a Camel," and "Not a cough in a carload." I am not sure how many I smoked, but I developed the cough they suggested, and that cough, after a very few years, deteriorated my bronchial tubes and lungs until they developed that terrible and incurable disease, emphysema. And now I can't walk a block, even for something worthwhile.

This disease caused me to have a heart attack and a Portland doctor ordered me to the hospital. Only a few years before, another prominent specialist had advised me to stop smoking. So now,

Editor's note: Correct. Or correct enough. One twister-worker said that, since the needle travels in an arc formed by the motion of the tone arm, it would be a tiny fraction more than 3 1/4 inches. But that's quibbling.

Buddhist-Christian Conflict Confuses Viet War Issues; U.S. Advice Ignored

By PHIL NEWSOM UPI Foreign News Analyst

The saffron robes of the Buddhist monks and the gleaming Buddhist temples are as much a part of Southeast Asia as the monsoons and the rice paddies. Buddhism is the state religion of Thailand. Laos is Buddhist and in South Vietnam it is estimated that 70 per cent of the population is Buddhist.

Which helps to explain mounting United States concern over the harsh repressive measures of South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem's government against the Buddhist majority there. As a religious dispute between the Catholic president

and the Buddhists, it is an internal matter, and one sort of thing, its effect upon a war in which the United States is deeply committed and upon the feelings of millions of Southeast Asians toward the United States is still another.

For, like it or not—and many Americans in South Vietnam do not—the United States is committed to win the anti-Communist struggle in South Vietnam on a slogan "Win with Diem."

The United States is doing its best to disassociate itself from the present dispute. UPI Correspondent Neil Sheehan reported on the basis of reliable sources in Saigon that, privately, U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission William Trueheart has urged Diem to settle the quarrel and get on with the war.



Be Patriotic-- Go Kick Somebody

By Arthur Hoppe

"Stamp out non-violence!" It was good to see my old friend, Miss Amanda, again with fire in her eye. Again, she is, as you may know, National Commander of the super patriotic action group. Which stamps out things.

I inquired why she was so violently opposed to non-violence. "It's a Communist plot!" she cried, slamming down her reticule. "I suspected it all along! Ever since those Peace Marchers started going limp! That showed right there that non-violence was a clever Commie device! Why's that? 'Because any body who's for peace is a Commie!'"

I said that made a heap of sense. "That's not all!" said Miss Amanda. "In no time, Communist racial agitators were refusing to strike back at police officers!" Communist racial agitators? "That," she explained, "is a Negro who wants to sit at a white lunch counter!"

Strong evidence of something, I said. "And now we have conclusive proof!" said Miss Amanda triumphantly. "We have checked! And double checked! There is no question! Our Commie-infiltrated clergymen are preaching this very same insidious doctrine of non-violence!"

No! "Yes! Love thine enemy! Turn the other cheek! That's the kind of subversive ideology our supposedly patriotic ministers are spreading." Were their congregations practicing it? "Not yet!" said Miss Amanda. "But they could be brainwashed any day! Our Republic is in mortal peril! As usual!"

I said I was sure that was true. But I wasn't sure exactly why. "Why?" shouted Miss Amanda. "Because such talk is a dagger in the heart of two-fisted Americanism! That's why! We must stand up and fight! Fire when you see the whites of their eyes! Don't tread on me! That's what any decent red-white-and-blue-blooded preacher should be preaching! But they are all pawns in this nefarious plot! Doom! Doom! Doom!"

I thought over what Miss Amanda had shouted very carefully. By George, I told her finally, she was right! It was a plot. Come to think of it, I had documentary evidence that a bearded revolutionary was behind the whole thing. And that these doctrines had been first adopted by a little band of fanatics who...

"Good boy!" hollered Miss Amanda, her eyes sparkling behind her bifocals as she whacked me on the back. "You are a true American! I certify you as such! Here are your membership cards in Project Alert, Project Awake and Project Up-and-at-Em! We will march forth together, shoulder to shoulder, to smash this plot! Stamp out nonviolence! May I sell you a pair of boots?"

Well, I said, even though it was unarguably a plot I wasn't exactly for stamping it out. Indeed, I kind of thought non-violence was a pretty good idea. And I was even sort of glad to see it might finally be catching on. After only 2,000 years.

The only trouble with practicing non-violence, if you ask me, is that it certainly tends to make other people violent. In fact, they always seem to want to crucify you. Still.

Today & Tomorrow

By Walter Lippmann (c) 1963, The Washington Post

POINT OF NO RETURN

The President, as his recent speeches show, is becoming more and more deeply engaged in the case of equality of rights and status for the American Negroes. He is bound to find himself drawn further into far-flung and as yet by no means clearly visible commitments.

For historical experience shows that there is, so to speak, a point of no return in a movement for the redress of grievances. That point is where gradual reform and token appeasement become suddenly not only insufficient, but irritating; the long-standing grievances, which have been patiently endured, are suddenly felt to be intolerable. Then instead of putting up with a little done slowly, there is a demand that much must be done suddenly.

For us, the point of no return was marked and symbolized in Birmingham. AFTER the point of no return has been passed, events are likely to take a course which is disconcerting to men of good will. As action is taken to redress the most ugly grievances, for example, discrimination in the use of public facilities and accommodations, the sense of grievance does not die down. On the contrary, it becomes sharper. Thus, we shall almost surely see that the administration's legislative proposals, though just and essential, will be followed by more, not less, pressure and discontent.

This, of course, is also the view of the convinced and confirmed segregationists, and indeed of all die-hard conservatives. To give in a little, say with token integration, is, they insist, to strengthen the demand, by feeding it, for complete integration. The answer to those who think this way is that, for a century, their remedy has been tried in several states. There is no longer any doubt that it can no longer be carried on.

The brutal truth of the matter had better be spelled out: it is that the rebellion of the Negroes against segregation cannot be suppressed, because the American people as a whole will not consent to the use of the violence which would be necessary to suppress the rebellion. The fire hose and the police dogs and mass arrests have shocked the nation. Yet, they are a mere slap on the wrist compared with what would have to be done to restore law and order.

Does the crystal ball say, then, that there will be a new popular movement of internal development and reform—without which the substantial grievances of Negroes cannot be redressed?

Many people, it is true, do not live up to their potential; but just as many, it seems to me, are trying to live beyond theirs. The air is filled with voices pontificating on everything from birth control to bomb-testing, and the voice of the reformed disk-jockey is often louder than that of the man who has devoted a lifetime to studying such matters. Too much is said about everything, and not enough of it has any meaning.

The puckish columnist is to be commended for working within his severe, but admirable, limitations, and refusing to become an oracle. What he does is small, but craftsmanlike, and it is a real pleasure among so many pundits whose volume is equalled only by their vacuity.

It's going to be a busy summer... 'sit-ins', 'ban the bomb demonstrations', 'civil-right demonstrations'... Boy, it's exciting being an American these days!

Flight o' Time

Medford and Jackson County History from the files of The Mail Tribune 10, 20, 30, 40 and 50 years ago.

10 YEARS AGO

June 12, 1953 (Friday) Young growing fruit in an extensive area west of Medford was badly bruised by hail this morning.

New infections of pear scab are now appearing in many Rogue valley orchards, according to county horticulturists.

20 YEARS AGO

June 12, 1943 (Saturday) Joseph Andrew William Skeeters, Talent, born in Jacksonville April 19, 1864, dies at his home.

From Arthur Perry's "Ye Smudge Pot" column: "Farmers are now urged to save straw as a shortage looms. Fears are felt there will not be enough to show which way the wind blows by Nov. 1."

30 YEARS AGO

June 12, 1933 (Monday) Nearly 1,000 men reported en route to Medford area Civilian Conservation corps camps.

Local interest high as jury completed for second Jackson county ballot theft trial.

40 YEARS AGO

June 12, 1923 (Tuesday) Mrs. D. R. Wood and party, Medford, first to reach Crater lake from this season.

Special election today on bond issue for new Medford high school building.

50 YEARS AGO

June 12, 1913 (Thursday) Southern Pacific and Pacific and Eastern railroads plan three early season excursions from Medford.

From Along Rogue River items: Attorney Kelly and Mr. Putnam were out to the river twice this week. Sunday they caught 32 trout.

What's Your I.Q.?

Nine or ten correct is superior; seven or eight is excellent; five or six is good.

- 1. Upon whose land in California was gold discovered?
2. The tendency of lumber to absorb more moisture on one side than on the other causes what?
3. Is the eagle, elephant, or tortoise, reputed to have the longest life span?
4. Does a patent automatically expire upon the death of the inventor?
5. In golf, what is an eagle?
6. What Christmas decorations grew as a parasite?
7. Correct the proverb: Marriages are made...
8. Correct the following: Neither the boys nor John are going.
9. Other than July and August, what two consecutive months have 31 days?
10. Who was the first President of the U.S. to live in the White House?

Answers: 1. J.P. Sutter. 2. Warping. 3. Tortoise. 4. No. 5. Two strokes under par. 6. Mistleton. 7. "...in heaven". 8. "...is going". 9. December and January. 10. John Adams.

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