

How Communist Subversives Promoted Public Education

By Samuel L. Blumenfeld

Most Americans are under the impression that Communism was invented by Marx and Lenin and first practiced in the Soviet Union. The truth, however, is quite different. Communism as an economic and political philosophy was invented by Robert Owen (1771-1858), a British manufacturer, who believed that all of man's ills were caused by religion. He became a social messiah when he "discovered" what he considered to be the basic truth about human character: that a man's character is made for him by society through upbringing, education and environment and not by himself as the religionists taught. Children in a cannibal society grow up to be adult cannibals. Children in a selfish, competitive society grow up to be selfish and competitive. No one is innately depraved or evil. An infant is a glob of plastic that can be molded to have whatever character society wishes him to have.

Owen started publishing his ideas in 1813, and in 1816 to prove that he was right, established his famous Institution for the Formation of Character at New Lanark, Scotland. Through a secular, scientific curriculum coupled with the notion that each pupil must strive to make his fellow pupils happy, Owen hoped to turn out little rational cooperative human beings, devoid of selfishness, religious superstition, and all of the other traits found in capitalist man.

In 1825, Robert Owen came to America to establish his communist colony at New Harmony, Indiana. The experiment received a great deal of newspaper publicity and attracted a large number of utopian followers. It was called "an experiment in social reform through cooperation and rational education." But in less than two years it failed. The problem, said Owen, was that people raised and educated under the old system were incapable of adapting themselves to the communist way of life no matter how much they professed to believe in it.

Therefore, the Owenites decided that rational, secular education had to precede the creation of a socialist society, and they subsequently launched a strong campaign to promote a national system of secular education. Owen's son, Robert Dale Owen, and feminist Frances Wright set up headquarters in New York, helped organize the Workingmen's Party as a front for Owenite ideas, published a radical weekly paper called *The Free Inquirer*, and lectured widely on socialism and national education.

Their anti-religious views, however, turned so many people from Owenism that they were forced to adopt covert techniques to further their ends. One of the men attracted to their cause was Orestes Brownson, a writer and editor, whose remarkable religious odyssey took him from Calvinism to Universalism to Socialism to Unitarian

Transcendentalism and finally to Catholicism. Years later, describing his short experience with the Owenites, Brownson wrote:

But the more immediate work was to get our system of schools adopted. To this end it was proposed to organize the whole Union secretly, very much on the plan of the Carbonari of Europe, of whom at that time I knew nothing. The members of this secret society were to avail themselves of all the means in their power, each in his own locality, to form public opinion in favor of education by the state at the public expense, and to get such men elected to the legislatures as would be likely to favor our purposes. How far the secret organization extended, I do not know; but I do know that a considerable portion of the State of New York was organized, for I was myself one of the agents for organizing it.

Thus, we know that as early as 1829, atheist socialists and communists had adopted covert techniques to further their ends in the United States, techniques which they continue to use to this day.

The Owenites wanted public schools in order to prepare American children for communism. The Unitarians wanted public schools in order to reduce Calvinist influence in education. The non-orthodox Protestants wanted public schools in order to counter the influence of massive Catholic immigration. In the end, they got a system of education which is now totally dominated by behavioral psychologists who believe that children can be trained like animals in conformity with the educators' belief in evolution.

Home-schoolers have caught on to the devious tricks of the educators and have moved their children out of the system. But until the majority of parents become aware of what the public schools are doing to their children, we are stuck with them.