

## A Guide to Socialism, Grades I-VII

Thousands of school patrons and taxpayers in Virginia will be shocked by disclosures in the letter that heads our Forum today. B. M. Miller, an Arlington businessman, calls attention to the official *Course of Study for Virginia Elementary Schools, Grades I-VII*. He quotes from it at some length, and he quotes accurately and damningly. He could have quoted a great deal more.

Here in this official guide, bearing the seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia on the cover, we find that elementary teachers in Virginia are asked "to emphasize" in their teaching that "the dependence of the laborer upon capital tends to reduce him to a servile status." A desirable "attitude" is laid down: "The whole world is now one community . . . individualism and class spirit are too narrow to meet the needs of coöperative living . . . the responsibility of the individual in the modern age extends to all mankind . . . economic stability and progress of society are conditioned upon the prevention of the acquisition of unearned and the accumulation of undistributable wealth . . . the inequitable distribution of the social income produces poverty, vice and disease."

These incredibly slanted, cockeyed assertions appear in a 14-page "check-list" of "aims of education." The Virginia elementary teacher is asked to check her own thinking against these statements, and is told flatly that "The teacher should constantly check against this suggestive list the behavior exhibited by her pupils." In this fashion, the teacher is told, a "desirable pattern of conduct" can be developed.

When Mr. Miller's disturbing letter came in, we obtained a copy of the *Course of Study*. It is a 553-page volume, published by the State Department of Education in 1943 as the outgrowth of conferences in 1942. How this one-sided potpourri of smears and half-truths got by the State Board of Education and the

then Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dabney S. Lancaster, is simply mystifying. But it did get by them, and for 11 solid years the *Course of Study* has been the official guide to teaching in Virginia schools, Grades One through Seven.

About a year ago, School Superintendent Dowell J. Howard tells us, the quoted portions were called to his attention. Since then, the State Department of Education has decided not to reprint the volume.

Meanwhile, however, the State department has done nothing to alert division superintendents and principals to the pro-Socialist nature of this propaganda. Amazingly, the board has not insisted on learning how these passages crept into the guide, a work of many hands, with a view toward preventing a repetition. To this day Mr. Howard does not know who wrote the passages, nor, according to him, has the board interviewed any of the persons directly responsible for the guide in an attempt to find out.

It is asking mighty little of our public school administrators that they give the principles of free enterprise at least a fair shake in their official "courses of study." It is not too much to suggest that elementary teachers acquaint their pupils with the "servile" nature of labor in the Communist state. It is at least debatable that the American citizen somehow has a responsibility "for all mankind." One might argue that "vice and disease" are not wholly caused by distribution of income.

If this fantastic "course of study" represents the economic thinking of our elementary school teachers, it is much later than many of us think. If the volume represents the subtle injection of propaganda by pro-Socialists in high places, let us know who they are! And if other such official guides to "desirable patterns of behavior" are in use, now is the time to know about it.

Governor Stanley is to be commended for the decisive action he took yesterday in ordering the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to recall and revise the fairly amazing publication known as *Course of Study for Virginia Elementary Schools, Grades I-VII*. Mr. Stanley said he was shocked by the thing, and well might be, for the volume, in the policy it lays down for business, industry, and government, is as subtle a piece of Socialist propaganda as any disciple of Norman Thomas could desire.

Mr. Stanley's sharp statement provided a welcome contrast to the flood of series of blub-blub noises that came from the Department of Education earlier in the day. Members of the State board seemed to take the view that they had not read the book, and they didn't think anyone else had read it either, so why bother?

Ray E. Reid, assistant superintendent of public instruction, gave the matter this book a three-way brush-off. He said (1) that the material now under discussion was not written in 1943, when the volume was published, but rather was written in the early 1930's for a previous edition of the work; (2) that the volume is not now in circulation, and (3) that eventually it will be replaced with other material.

We are not impressed.

The copy on our desk carries "Acknowledgement" that recites in detail the efforts that went into the 1943 revision. During 1940-41, it appears, more than 7,000 teachers from 101 of the 110 school divisions made suggestions for revision of the course of study in elementary grades. These suggestions led to a five-week conference in 1941. Then, in April, 1942, top-ranking educators in the elementary field conducted a further two-day conference on the matter. In the first week of June, 1942, supervisors at