

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No.

785017

ACC

10000/109/1560

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No.

785017

10000/109/1560

EDUCATION, CHILD WELFARE
FEB., MAR. 1944

270
HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
APO 394
Education Subcommittee

ED/WHS/tjr

9
F 1 APR Recd

20 March 1944

ED/2-3/ACC

SUBJECT: Religion in the Schools.

TO : Executive Commissioner,
R.C. & M.G. Section.

1. The attached correspondence, filed in this office for purposes of record, may be of interest to you in connection with the recent report on Religious Education called for by Washington.

For the Director of Education:

W. H. Sherwood
W. H. SHERWOOD
Major, R.E.

Put Away
W. H. Sherwood

CAB
2 Feb

ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
Education Sub-Commission

TO : Deputy, Director Education Sub-Commission

FROM : Director, Education Sub-Commission A.C.C.

REF : Religion in the school.

DATE : March 6. 1944

1.- Acknowledgements are hereby made and thanks recorded for your report (dated 29 February 1944) as to the previous policy of this subcommission in regard to religion in the Italian schools and as to its method of liquidating administrative incidents.

2.- There can be no just perturbation on the part of this Sub-Commission as to the course which concluded the incident in Sicily to which reference is made. Your own attitude and the official action of the subcommission has been so manifestly correct that the record may well be allowed to speak, as it has spoken, the final word; and your precedent is now become our continuing policy.

3.- It is not as though our educational effort had started, could start, de novo as touching either State or Church. We found a State defeated but a Church triumphant in the schools through a Treaty and Concordat concluded with that now defeated state. To extirpate the doctrines of the State from the schools but to respect the privileged position of the Church in the schools was the indication of our double duty. In a situation so ambiguous it is providential that we did not make serious mistakes. It was hardly ours to presume upon matters of the highest international policy. In this premise we were soldiers, not philosophers; and in this practice we were administrators, not evaluators. An evaluative success was beyond our power, so blame for errors of original judgment is outside our deserts. In operation we were not even privileged to remark the narrowing of religious essence to what in all three of our great allied lands (not to mention China as the fourth) would by a great majority of our citizens be regarded as doctrinaire rather than sacrosanct and what in the United States at least would offend both the deepest constitutional credo, that of separation of Church and state, and the highest moral credo, that of toleration as between utter equals of all competing theological creeds.

4.- If defence be needed for your, our, course, it could hardly be defence against censure from responsible Catholic sources; for, to repeat we have accorded maximum deference to the all but maximum monopoly accorded Catholicism by fascism. (We even went beyond the Lateran Treaty and the Concordat in the matter of permitting the opening of new church schools in Sicily). Our right flank is thus secure from attacks from the Right. It has the momentary safety of surrender to the Catholic-Fascist Pact and Concordat of 1929. It is our left flank which is in dialectical peril, and all the more so because our Center was fixed by

historic accident rather than by our original judgment. If, however, the Italian people were presently to will into being a spiritual force pressing upon education from as far to our British-American Left as the present spiritual pressure is to our Right, let our defence be ready, and be indeed the same demurrer of correctness as now; that in Italy we were soldiers obeying orders, leaving politics to statesmen and religion to God.

T. V. Smith
T. V. SMITH
Lt. Col., A.U.S.
Director of Education.

TVS/DA

ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
Education Sub-commission

TO : Director Education Subcommittee A.C.C.
FROM : Deputy Director
SUBJECT : Religion in the Schools.
REF : ED/
DATE : 29 February 1944

1.- Queries coming to you from Washington and the Vatican indicate a misapprehension as to fact and a misunderstanding as to the policy and attitude of the Education Subcommittee in regard to religious education in the schools. Since the origin of the distorted rumors was, in all probability, an episode in Sicily with which I was directly concerned, and which took place when you were not there, I am presenting herein a full statement of the facts of the case.

2.- When I came to Sicily early in October, 1943, Lt.Col.Gayre, then Adviser in Education for A.M.G., asked me to take charge of the preparation of courses of study and instructions to teachers (known here as "programs") for the elementary and secondary schools, and the examination and revision of the text books.

We agreed that this work should be done by competent Italians under our supervision, that it should be confined largely to the elimination of fascism and anti-Ally propaganda, and that no changes would be made in regard to religious instructions.

3.- A Commission in Palermo had already been appointed by Lt.Col.Poletti on Col. Gayre's recommendation to advise on educational matters. Lt.Col.Gayre made some slight additions to this commission and we used it as a commission for the preparation of the new "Programs" for all occupied Italy. The Provveditore agli Studi in Palermo was chairman, the Cardinal had one or two representatives on the commission; the Chief Inspector of Elementary Schools was a member; the other members were, for the most part, professors of the various secondary school subjects. This Commission was asked to go through last years "programs" and to revise them so as to eliminate fascism and propaganda against the Allies. It was also suggested that they might make

- 2 -

some improvements. The Commission met frequently and produced the series of programs which we have published and distributed to teachers throughout occupied Italy.

4.- The Commission was so predominantly composed of people in the field of secondary education that a special subcommittee was organized to work on the elementary program. This was headed by the Chief Inspector of Elementary Schools, and included two elementary school directors and a class room teacher, all selected by him. This subcommittee prepared the basic elementary school program which has been published and distributed.

5.- From the beginning, however, it was evident that on neither the Commission as a whole nor the elementary subcommittee was there anyone familiar with modern psychology and pedagogy. It seemed undesirable not to give to teachers, particularly in the elementary school, an opportunity to move forward a little in the direction of a democratic and modern type of education; yet the Commission's programs were rigid, over-academic and compulsory and would prevent any teacher or school from using modern psychology in his work.

It was, therefore, decided, while the Commission was still at work, to try to add some element of democratic and scientific thinking to the Commission.

The one man in Palermo who was expert in this field was Dr. Gino Feretti, the Professor of Pedagogy and Psychology in the University of Palermo. He was a man of such eminent scholarship that, despite his anti-fascism, he had been kept in his post through the fascist regime.

With the consent of the chairman of the Commission he was retained as a consultant.

6.- Feretti's ideal clashed so violently with those of other members of the Commission that it proved impractical to have him continue to meet with them. It was therefore suggested that he write a supplementary pamphlet on "Advice for modernizing the Elementary School". The minutes of the commission show that this proposal was heartily endorsed.

- 3 -

7.- Feretti, being notoriously anticlerical, was instructed to write nothing about religion in his pamphlet, but to deal exclusively with the pedagogy and psychology of a modern school program.

8.- Feretti's pamphlet was published separately, as planned, but distributed to Provveditori throughout Sicily for redistribution to all elementary teachers with the basic programs prepared by the Commission and Subcommittee.

9.- A representative of the Cardinal, on reading Feretti's pamphlet felt that it was anti-religious in tone; that when Feretti spoke of the knowledge of science as doing away with superstition it was a covert attack on the Church; and so on. He and his associates made a violent protest to Lt.Col.Gayre against the pamphlet being distributed under our auspices.

10.- In the Program for the lower secondary schools the word "facoltativa" (elective) was printed after the caption "Religion". This was because, according to the Lateran Pact and common practice, any student could absent himself from religious instruction on request of his parents.

The Cardinal's representative, however, feared that "facoltativa" might be interpreted as meaning that it was elective on the part of the school as to whether Religion should be offered at all. He was much perturbed .

11.- General Mc Sherry had sent me up to the peninsula to take the first steps toward opening schools in all occupied territory, shortly before these protests were made. Lt.Col.Gayre, therefore, asked the Cardinal's representatives to wait till my return for a decision on what to do and meanwhile agreed to stop further distribution of the programs concerned in Sicily and to stop the printing of them in other regions. He immediately carried out his agreement. I assume, however, that it was in the interim between that conference and my return a few days later that protests went to Washington and the Vatican.

12.- On my return we held two conference with the Cardinal's representatives. The decision, in which they fully concurred, was as follows:

- 4 -

3

- a) Feretti's pamphlet would be withdrawn from circulation insofar as undistributed copies remained in the hands of Provveditori agli Studi. All agreed that a demand on each teacher to give back the copy he might have would give undue emphasis to the pamphlet.

The pamphlet would not be published in other regions.

- b) A notice would be sent to all Provveditori agli Studi calling their attention to the fact that the Lateran Pact must be complied with and religious education offered in all schools.

- c) Printings of the program for the lower secondary schools in other regions would avoid the use of the word "facoltativa" in relation to religious instruction.

These agreements were promptly put into effect.

13.- The whole matter closed amicably, with agreement on everyone's part, and the incident was considered closed.

14.- In Naples a new Commission was formed to write a pamphlet on "Advice for Modernizing the Elementary School". On this we were careful to invite the Cardinal's Secretary to sit. He himself wrote the part on religious education, which was given the first place in the program; and he passed on every detail of the remaining parts. He expressed warm appreciation of our cooperation. The new pamphlet has just now been published in this region and sent to other regions for reprinting and distribution.

15.- An examination of all programs will show that religious education, in accordance with the provisions of the Lateran Pact and the courses worked out by the Catholic Church, has been included, from the beginning, in the programs of all schools.

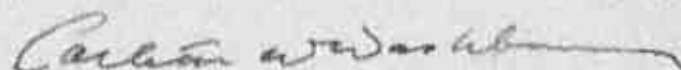
16.- The religious education in the text books has not been changed at all. The new series reprints this part of the old series exactly as it was last year. Unfortunately it has been impossible to reproduce many of the illustrations, lack of original photographs and plates and other prime materials having necessitated the elimination of half-tones from all parts of the books. But the typed material remains intact.

17.- It has been the policy of the Education Subcommittee from the beginning to keep hands off on all matters of religious education, to maintain the status quo ante, and to work as harmoniously and cooperatively as possible with the Church.

- 5 -

24

Except for the momentary episode described herein, our relations with Church officials have been entirely friendly and cordial. Even in this episode, personal relations were friendly and cooperative on both sides.



CARLETON W. WASHBURNE
Major AUS
Deputy Director

CWW/da

ALLIED CONTROL COMMISSION
Education Subcommittee

TO : Regional Directors of Education.
FROM : Education Subcommittee.
SUBJECT : Milk for School Children.

1. While I was conferring with Brigadier Lush a couple of weeks ago, he suggested and rather urged that milk, hot soup, or some kind of lunch be provided at noon to school children in liberated Italy.
2. Will you, therefore, consult your RCO, other Regional Division heads whose cooperation might be needed, and your Provveditori agli Studi in regard to feasibility and desirability of putting this suggestion into effect.
3. Please inform this Hq. as to what action you plan to take, or as to your reasons for taking no action.

CARLETON W. WASHBURN
Major, AUS
Acting Deputy
Educational Advisor

CRW/as

21291