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Fiction Or Truth About the Soviet Union

We are beginning to see the first results of the U.S.-U.S.S.R. agreements (signed by our State Department in November 1985) to develop educational materials for American elementary school students. A big dish of Soviet propaganda was served up to American third and fourth graders in Scholastic News, which proclaims itself as "America's Classroom Newspaper."

The October 16 issue couldn't do a better job of selling the Soviet Union if it had been prepared by the KGB Department of Disinformation. It paints the U.S.S.R. as just like Anytown, U.S.A., while omitting mention of the genocide, the terror, and the intransigent evil of the Bolshevik regime.

The excuse for this color spread about Russia is the 70th anniversary of the founding of the Soviet Union in October 1917, which the Soviets now celebrate on November 7. Scholastic falsely tells American children that November 7 is the Soviet "Constitution Day" and is the same sort of anniversary that we celebrated on September 17.

That's a lie. September 17 is the anniversary of the signing of the United States Constitution, a document that peacefully brought into existence a government which has survived the peaceful transition of 40 Presidents and given us 200 years of unparalleled freedom and economic growth. November 7 is the 70th birthday of the Soviet government, born in cold-blooded murder, with an unbroken record of tyranny, denial of religious freedom, slave labor camps, poverty induced by Communism, and a political system which rewards murder as

the path to the top.

Scholastic tells American schoolchildren that before 1917 Russia was ruled by czars who were "especially cruel" and "had to use brute force and censorship to keep power," and that after 1917 the Soviet Union gave the Russian people "a different kind of government" which is "something to celebrate." The fact is that the people in Russia are less free under Communism than they were under the czars, and economically they have regressed from a nation that exported wheat to one that can't even feed its own people without subsidized grain shipments from the United States.

Scholastic falsely tells U.S. schoolchildren that Gorbachev has brought freedom to Russia. Scholastic even includes a feature about the Soviets starting to play the great American game baseball, and says that it might have been invented by the Russians!

Scholastic promotes the Samantha Smith kiddie exchange program, which was started as a propaganda ploy by Communist Party boss Yuri Andropov in 1983. Its purpose is evident when Scholastic quotes a 10-year-old American schoolchild as visiting the Soviet Union and reporting upon her return, "It felt like home, because the people are like us."

Scholastic gives U.S. schoolchildren a discussion assignment: "Last year, many Americans fought to have ratings similar to movie ratings put on record albums. Is this in any way like the Soviet government telling musicians they must change their lyrics or they won't be paid for what they do? Explain."

The notion that movie or album ratings in the United States are in any way comparable to Communist thought control is as ludicrous as comparing an American Boy Scout camp to the Gulag Archipelago.

In another duplicitous remark, Scholastic states: "Until recently, under the Soviet communist government, everybody worked for the state." That clearly implies that the situation is significantly different now, whereas in truth it is not.

If the schoolchildren or their teachers need more resource information on the Soviet Union, Scholastic directs them to Soviet Life, published by the Embassy of the U.S.S.R. That's a dead giveaway of where Scholastic got its disinformation.

Parents who would like to refute the Scholastic propaganda can get a convenient catalogue of the Lenin-to-Gorbachev crimes of Soviet Communism in the Fall 1987 issue of Policy Review (published by the Heritage Foundation, Washington, D.C.). This listing proves that the Soviet Union is, indeed, an evil empire based on merciless mass terror implemented by a ruthless secret police, a relentless war on all religion and human rights, and total control over every means of livelihood in order to keep the people subservient through hunger and poverty.

It's too bad that American schoolchildren are being fed Soviet propaganda instead of the truth, which has been so massively documented by eyewitness reports of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Robert Conquest and corroborated by Amnesty International.