

THE INSTITUTE FOR SEMANTOGRAPHY

A Non-Profit Institution for the Promotion of Semantics and Semantography

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THE COMMUNIST REVIEW CONDEMNS SEMANTOGRAPHY

The articles on Semantography which appeared in the "Sydney Morning Herald" in 1952 (Semantography Series No. 61) inspired a communist Mr. L. Harry Gould to write an article on "The Philosophy of Semantics" which appeared in the Sydney Communist Review of April, 1952. Mr. Gould starts with a condemnation of Semantography and continues then to berate the idea of Semantics. The following excerpt deals only with Semantography. The part of the article which deals with Semantics may form the basis of a later issue of the Semantography Series.

"This article deals with the latest charlatantry of philosophic idealism, Semantics. But first a few words on "semantography", a sign-language based on Semantics which the SMH (2/1/52) describes as the invention of an Austrian refugee in Australia, and which could "educate millions of illiterate people in backward countries".

In real fact "semantography" would perpetuate illiteracy, and confirm the backwardness and enslavement of subject peoples throughout the world. This particular invention (there are others) is a worthy product in the epoch of imperialism, one designed to rivet still more securely the chains of imperialist domination. It is on a par with the "education" of natives by the colonial lords through "schools" teaching manual labour, needlecraft, cookery, and the like, to produce cheap docile labor.

But the peoples of China, Malaya, Korea and everywhere are exhibiting a taste for education of quite a different kind!

"Semantography" is essentially, racist in its approach, just as Hitlerism was. The basic sociological premise is that other peoples are "naturally" inferior, and therefore doomed to serve the "master" races forever; these other peoples, as the singer of imperialism Rudyard Kipling so "poetically" expressed it, are "the lesser breeds without the Law".

Compare this obscurantist invention with the educational advance and cultural efflorescence in the Soviet Union, and the already magnificent successes in ending illiteracy in People's Democracies!

This Austrian's invention does emphasise, in its own negative way, why less and less is being spent in capitalism on education; why billions are easily available for armaments, but little or none for school buildings; why many millions of USA citizens, living in the "richest country on earth" are illiterate; why, in Australia, the Aborigine people are denied the elements of education.

That Bertrand Russell is enthusiastic about "semantography" is understandable. Russell, master "philosopher" and "logician" (Humph!), is an ardent advocate of atom-bomb warfare; Russell wants repeated visitations of plagues like the black death to rid the earth of the "surpluses" of plain people, the "herd", as he calls them and whom he hates. Russell, Semantics and Semantography are worthy of one another!"

(Note: This condemnation of semantography does not apply to invented universal languages, such as Esperanto or Id. Whatever their merits or demerits, at least they are predicated upon literacy of all peoples, and aim at universal brotherhood and peace).

Note by Bliss: I refrain from any comment, because I think that some of the allegations concerning me and Semantography are too absurd (in my view). I intend, however, to analyse the article at a later date (if I find the time) in order to show ^{that} Mr. Gould himself is a victim of words, as in fact most communist adherents in the western world are.