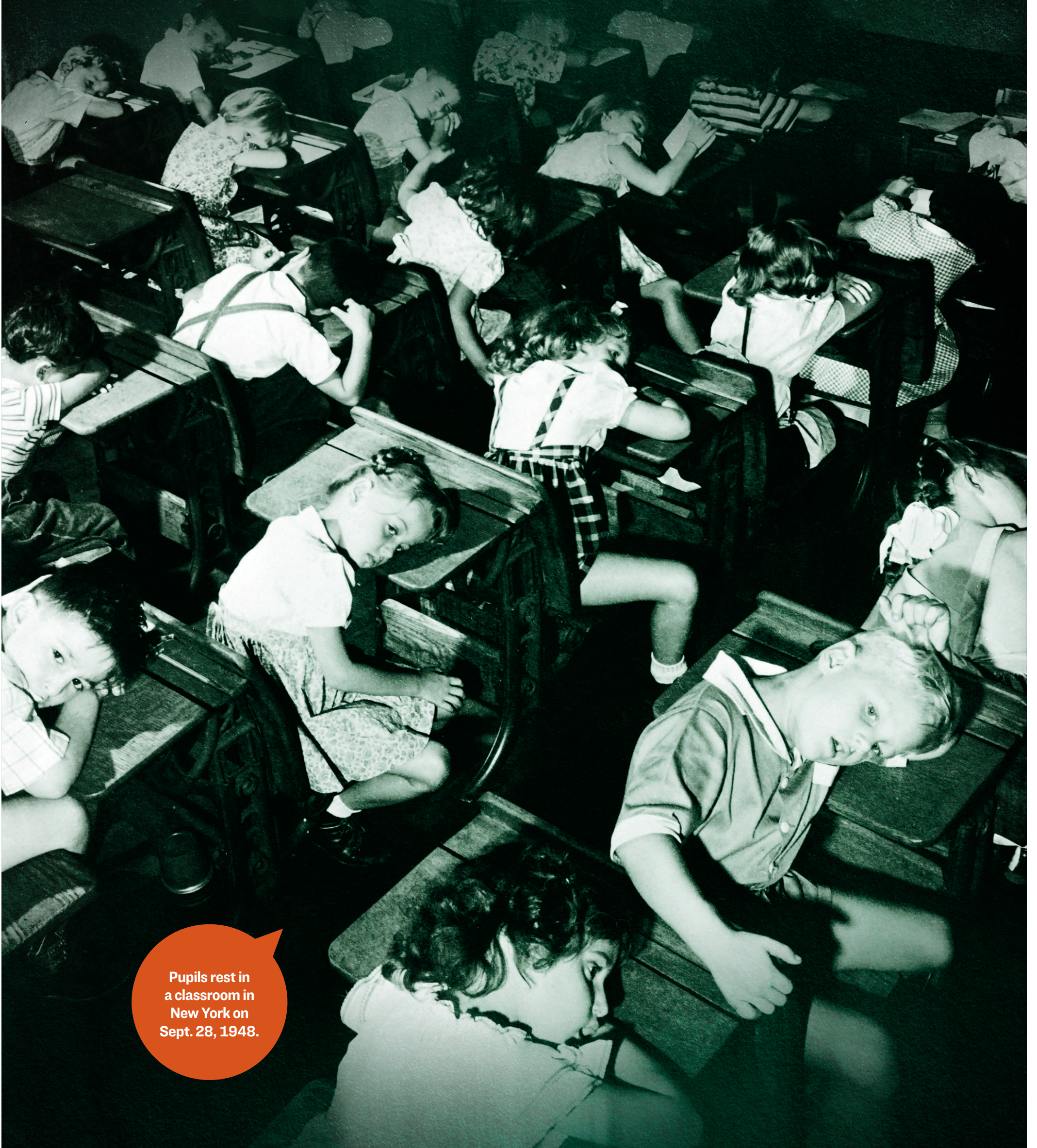


WEEK 40, 2019

THE EPOCH TIMES

# AMERICAN CROSSROADS



Pupils rest in a classroom in New York on Sept. 28, 1948.

THE GENESIS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS:

# COLLECTIVISM AND FAILURE

See Page 3



# American Maoists Building Support for Mexican Revolutionary Movement: Huge Implications for US National Security

PEDRO PARDO/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

TREVOR LOUDON



## Commentary

The United States' main Maoist organization, Liberation Road, is developing support networks for

Mexico's ruling leftist party MORENA and its leader, Mexico's socialist president Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (popularly known as AMLO).

Liberation Road sees Mexico under its present leadership as a major force for the revolutionary transformation of the United States. With a population of around 128 million, a communist Mexico, sharing a 2,000-mile border with this country, would become a national security nightmare of epic proportions. America's Maoists are working hard to make that nightmare a reality.

According to Liberation Road's newly formed Solidarity Project with the People of Mexico:

"México, more than any other country of the world, will influence our struggle in the US for transformational change from imperialist capitalism to socialism. Will the US succeed in maintaining Mexico as a vassal state? Or will México point the way for US social movements to gain governing power?"

Liberation Road is the new name for Freedom Road Socialist Organization (FRSO), a national communist formation formed out of the various Maoist splinter groups of the 1960s, '70s, and '80s. The name change—instituted at a completely unpublicized national congress in April—ends years of confusion. Another group also calling itself Freedom Road Socialist Organization, centered around FightBack! magazine, split from the main group in 1999. All future references to FRSO in this article refer to the larger FRSO/Liberation Road formation.

In recent years, FRSO has built a Latin@ Left Project/Project Izquierda Latina, aimed at building bridges with Latin American revolutionary movements. Since the victory of AMLO and MORENA in 2018, Mexico has become a major focus of Liberation Road's Latin American solidarity work.

According to the Washington Post, AMLO was always on the far left even while he worked inside the mainstream of Mexican politics:

"Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador began his political career with the Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, which had been at the heart of Mexico's authoritarian system since 1929.

"At the time, there was no other option for an aspiring politician," said José Agustín Ortiz Pinchetti, a former top aide to Lopez Obrador ...

"Even during his PRI days, Lopez Obrador saw himself as an activist, representing the state of Tabasco in negotiations with Pemex, trying to convince oil workers that they should demand better wages and benefits. He named his son Jesús Ernesto after Ernesto 'Che' Guevara, the Marxist guerrilla who fought with Fidel Castro in Cuba. ...

"But the PRI grew frustrated with Lopez Obrador, considering him 'a communist with Cuban instincts' ..."

In 1989, AMLO joined the left-leaning Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) and was the party's national leader between 1996 and 1999. He left the PRD in 2012 to later found the National Regeneration Movement (MORENA), which catapulted him to the presidency in July 2018 in alliance with the leftist Labor Party and the moderate Social Encounter Party. AMLO won with 53 percent of the vote.

AMLO has maintained close ties to the Sao Paulo Forum, an alliance of more than 100 socialist and communist parties credited with moving most of Latin America into the socialist camp in the 1990s. The Forum was founded by Cuba's communist leader Fidel Castro and former Brazilian president Lula da Silva "to save what had been lost of Communism



Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (C), Mexican Navy Secretary Adm. Jose Rafael Ojeda Duran (R) and Mexican Defence Secretary Gen. Luis Cresencio Sandoval, take part in a parade celebrating the anniversary of the country's independence, at the Zocalo Square in Mexico City on Sept. 16, 2019.

in Eastern Europe and the old USSR."

Through a letter to the 2011 meeting of the Sao Paulo Forum, AMLO explained the rationale behind his new MORENA project. He emphasized that MORENA has as its first task to defeat the "political oligarchy" of Mexico.

AMLO told the assembled Marxist revolutionaries from all over South and Central America:

"We can share that in these difficult times for Mexico, we are building a popular and citizen movement that seeks to carry out the deep transformation of the country ..."

One of Liberation Road's key points of contact to the Mexican revolutionary movement has been Javier Bravo, a MORENA activist and a professor of history and archaeology at the University of Guanajuato and a participant in FRSO's Project Izquierda Latina.

Bravo studied in the Soviet Union at the end of the openly communist era and lives part of the year in Havana, Cuba. FRSO/Liberation Road has brought Bravo to the United States for at least two tours to explain the revolutionary potential of MORENA and its leader AMLO to U.S. comrades.

On Sept. 19 and 20, Bravo addressed Liberation Road's Mexican Solidarity Coalition / Coalicion en Solidaridad con Mexico in San Diego. The meeting was organized by longtime FRSO/Liberation Road activist Martin Eder.

The Mexican Solidarity Coalition wrote on Facebook:

"Professor Javier Bravo, a long-time activist and a rep for MORENA will be ... speaking about current struggles in Mexico & how we build a movement against Trump to stop the right-wings ethnic cleansing against Mexican & other immigrants."

This followed a Boston meeting for Bravo convened Sunday, Sept. 15, which was co-sponsored by Liberation Road and the Solidarity Project with the People of Mexico.

Co-organizers were Garrett Virchick of the Boston Teachers Union and Gabriel Mireles, associate director of the Massachusetts Nurses Association—both known Liberation Road affiliates. Mireles wrote on the Liberation Road website that his Solidarity Project with the People of Mexico had four main objectives:

1/ Expose and resist political, social, military and economic US interventionist efforts that deny Mexico the right to self-determination and aim to bring down the AMLO government. ...

2/ Provide information and analysis about what's really happening in Mexico to counter the mainstream media

that demonizes and/or belittles leftist governments.

3/ Spread the lessons from Mexico's experience of movement building and electoral activism to increase democratic participation and build progressive independent political organization within the US that would advance a pro-people foreign policy.

4/ Build a broad-based grassroots solidarity project of individuals and organizations on the model of CISPES to connect social movement activists on both sides of the border to shift power from US and Mexican elites to the peoples of our countries.

CISPES refers to the Committee in Solidarity with the Peoples of El Salvador, one of the communist movement's most successful operations on U.S. soil.

In 1980, the El Salvadoran Communist Party, then fighting a guerrilla war with their government, sent Farid Handal, brother of the Party chairman, Shafik Handal, to the United States. His mission was to organize a North American support network for the El Salvadoran guerrilla army.

According to Newsweek journalist Arnaud de Borchgrave, quoted in The American Journal of International Law:

"CISPES was formed in October 1980 as a direct result of a visit to the United States by Farid Handal, brother of the secretary general of the Salvadoran Communist Party Shafik Handal. His principal adviser in this venture was Alfredo Garcia Almeida, at that time the station chief of the Departamento de America of the Cuban Communist Party in New York. ...

"CISPES was subsequently set up as a tax-exempt organization with an office in Washington and countrywide chapters, that included 500 college campuses."

CISPES consistently supported the El Salvadoran communists, agitating against U.S. aid to the El Salvadoran elected government and also joining in demonstrations against aid to the anti-communist forces in neighboring Nicaragua.

Clearly, Liberation Road, which enjoys close relations with the larger Communist Party USA (with an estimated 5,000 members) and the nearly 60,000-member strong Democratic Socialists of America, intends on building major operations in support of the unfolding Mexican revolution.

In a recent conversation, a moderate former member of MORENA told me that the leading militant faction of the party is planning a major swing to the

hard left, probably after Mexico's 2021 congressional elections. In the words of my contact, "they know this will wreck the Mexican economy—but they don't care."

If AMLO and MORENO take Mexico's 128 million down the Cuba/Venezuela road as it seems they intend to do, the consequences could turn into the worst national security crisis this country has ever faced.

Venezuela's Marxist-driven economic and political crises have driven more than 2 million refugees into neighboring countries. If AMLO and MORENO succeed in driving Mexico to economic ruin, we could see 10s of millions of refugees clamoring to cross the border into the United States. Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California, even Florida, could be engulfed by a human tidal wave like nothing we have ever seen before. This chaos would be a major advance for the Mexican, U.S., and world revolutionary movements.

The current flooding of the border by 10s of then thousands of illegal immigrants a month could be seen as a dress rehearsal for a possible human tsunami currently building in Mexico.

President Ronald Reagan fought with mixed success to overturn the communist revolutions in Cuba, Nicaragua, and El Salvador. He understood that if communism was not pushed back in Central America it would eventually reach the U.S.—Mexico border—we are now almost at that point.

President Donald Trump must pick up Reagan's fallen sword before it's too late.

The first step is to order an investigation of Liberation Road's Mexican revolutionary support networks under the Foreign Agents Registration Act—it is very likely they are not registered as agents of the Mexican government.

President Trump has actively worked to thwart the revolutionary regimes of Cuba and Venezuela. He must soon begin to formulate plans to counter a potentially even more dangerous revolutionary movement in Mexico.

*Trevor Loudon is an author, filmmaker, and public speaker from New Zealand. For more than 30 years, he has researched radical left, Marxist, and terrorist movements and their covert influence on mainstream politics.*

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With a population of around 128 million, a communist Mexico, sharing a 2,000-mile border with this country, would become a national security nightmare of epic proportions.



# The Genesis of Public Schools: Collectivism and Failure

ALEX NEWMAN



*Commentary*  
Standardized tests show Americans are getting dumber and dumber with each passing year.

And polls now consistently show that over half of young Americans today prefer socialism over freedom. This is obviously not sustainable—at least if the United States is going to survive as a free society. It's also not an accident.

To solve this crisis, it's essential to have an understanding of where public schools came from and what existed prior to their establishment. After all, before the proliferation of government schools, Americans were the best-educated people on the planet—just consider the Founding Fathers, and the “Federalist Papers,” to get a sense of the level of education that once prevailed in America.

The history of how the government was able to take over—and the characters behind that effort—is almost incredible. Much of that shadowy story, though, is barely known today, even among educational experts. That's a problem, and potentially an existential threat.

When examined honestly, the history of public education—and a study of the key men who laid the foundations for the system that now exists—reveals a long-term plan by Utopians to totally re-shape humanity and civilization along collectivist lines. This agenda has been remarkably successful thus far, as the polling data show.

Everybody involved in education knows about John Dewey and Horace Mann, of course. These two socialist luminaries are almost universally credited with having created the modern public education system in the United States. Their backgrounds and views will be addressed in upcoming articles in this series on education.

But the true story of government schools has its origins long before Mann became the first education commissioner of Massachusetts, with his radical plan to have the government take over education using the Prussian model.

## New Harmony

Much of the earlier history of public schools—before Mann picked up the baton—remains not just obscure, but practically unknown. Were it not for the meticulous research of the late Dr. Samuel Blumenfeld, a passionate educator who devoted six decades of his life to studying education and the science of reading, it might still be awaiting discovery in dusty old libraries and university archives in the United States and Europe.

The real story of government education can be traced to a long-forgotten communist commune in Indiana called “New Harmony,” and its eccentric founder. Established in the 1820s by Robert Owen, a Welsh Utopian who rejected Christianity and private property, the idea behind the settlement was to show the world that collectivism was actually superior to individualism.

Like the communist experiments of the 20th century—Cuba, Zimbabwe, North Korea, the Soviet Union, and so on—New Harmony was a disaster, albeit not as bloody as the socialist experiments of later years. Within two years of its establishment, though, everybody knew New Harmony was a total failure.

The utter implosion of this experiment in collectivism, which preceded Karl Marx's “The Communist Manifesto” by some two decades, is the reason those early advocates of collectivism made the adoption of mandatory government schools for all children

Members of the Chicago Teachers Union gathered at a rally ahead of an upcoming potential educators strike in Chicago on Sept. 24, 2019.



SCOTT HEINS/GETTY IMAGES

**This Owen-inspired totalitarian model of schooling, which segregated children by age and coerced parents to surrender their children to the state for 'education,' would eventually become the model for Massachusetts.**

their top priority. The thinking was that the commune failed not because of anything wrong with communism or collectivism, but because the people living there had not been properly socialized and “educated” to be collectivists from childhood.

Just like Marx and Engels would claim decades later, the Owenites believed that what was needed were government schools that would take over child rearing from the earliest possible ages. And so that became their sole focus.

## Character Education

Among other ideas, Owen rejected the prevailing Calvinist views of America in that era. These held that man is innately depraved and that his heart is desperately wicked. Owen believed the reason men were evil, selfish, individualistic, and violent was the result of their upbringing, not their nature. He believed human nature was essentially good, and that a collectivist education would help create what would later come to be known as the “New Soviet man.”

Even before he set up New Harmony, Owen had well-developed ideas on the sort of education that would be needed to build his imagined Utopia. He published some of his views on this subject in 1813 in a collection dubbed “A New View of Society or Essays on the Formation of the Human Character.”

“It follows that every state, to be well governed, ought to direct its chief attention to the formation of character, and that the best-governed state will be that which shall possess the best national system of education,” Owen declared.

“Under the guidance of minds competent to its direction, a national system of training and education may be formed, to become the most safe, easy, effectual, and economical instrument of government that can be devised. And it

may be made to possess a power equal to the accomplishment of the most grand and beneficial purposes.”

Years later, Owen explained in his own autobiography that his essays on education had been given to the king of Prussia by the Prussian ambassador. According to Owen's account, the Prussian ruler had “so much approved” of these ideas that he ordered his own government to create a national education system based upon them. And thus, the Prussian system of education—schooling of the state, by the state, and for the state—was officially born.

This Owen-inspired totalitarian model of schooling, which segregated children by age and coerced parents to surrender their children to the state for “education,” would eventually become the model for Massachusetts—and then the nation as a whole. And the history would gradually be forgotten as the rotten fruit of this system began to undermine traditional American values and ideas.

## Secret Society

Long before the horrific communist slaughters and genocides of the 20th century, Owen and his ideas found enthusiastic supporters among certain segments of the American elite. One of Owen's early disciples was Orestes Brownson, a prominent New England writer and editor who became totally dedicated to the cause.

Unlike Owen, though, who went to his grave passionately believing that simply getting control of the children through government schools would produce Utopia, Brownson eventually rejected collectivism, converted to Catholicism, and blew the whistle on the schemes of his former associates.

“The great object was to get rid of Christianity,” Brownson explained in “An Oration on Liberal Studies” after seeing the

light. “The plan was not to make open attacks on religion although we might belabor the clergy and bring them into contempt where we could; but to establish a system of state, we said, national schools, from which all religion was to be excluded, in which nothing was to be taught but such knowledge as is verifiable by the senses and to which all parents were to be compelled by law to send their children.”

Today, that is the norm. But back in the early- to mid-1800s, it would have been inconceivable to average people.

The first element of the plan, Brownson revealed, was to establish a system of government-controlled schools. “For this purpose a secret society was formed,” Brownson continued, saying the plan was to model it on the Carbonari in Europe.

**Before the proliferation of government schools, Americans were the best-educated people on the planet.**

“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.”

While Brownson did not know how far the secret society's tentacles extended, he did know that a “considerable portion of the State of New York was organized.” He knew that, he said, because “I was myself one of the agents for organizing it.”

By the very nature of “secret” societies, much of the history of this network remains concealed. But it is obvious that they found great success in advancing government schools. In less than a century, government education proliferated all across the United States.

Stay tuned to this space for more of that incredible history in the weeks and months to come.

*Alex Newman is an award-winning international journalist, educator, author, and consultant who co-wrote the book “Crimes of the Educators: How Utopians Are Using Government Schools to Destroy America's Children.” He also serves as the CEO of Liberty Sentinel Media and writes for diverse publications in the United States and abroad.*

*Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.*

Striking teachers and their supporters rally in downtown Los Angeles on Jan. 15, 2019.



ROBYN BECK/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



# Rep. Omar to Commemorate Cuban Spy at Far-Left DC ‘Think Tank’

HOLLY KELLUM/NTD



Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) speaks at a press conference at the Capitol on July 15, 2019.

## TREVOR LOUDON



*Commentary*  
Controversial Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) is about to associate herself with one of the most subversive organizations in this country.

On Oct. 3, Omar will present the annual Letelier-Moffitt Awards at the Washington-based Institute for Policy Studies (IPS). The IPS is a center of both far-left policy formation and support for the Palestinian socialist cause. The Letelier-Moffitt Award is named after the late Orlando Letelier, a paid Cuban intelligence agent.

With Omar's strong ties to radical groups such as the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) and the Palestinian socialist cause, she is a perfect fit for the IPS—whose columnists have been defending her regular outrageous statements since her election to Congress.

An IPS press release states:

“We're excited to announce that Representative Ilhan Omar of Minnesota's 5th District will present this year's Letelier-Moffitt Awards!

“Rep. Omar has made herself a key figure in the progressive movement by working with a diverse group of legislators on the best ideas in politics today; bold, transformative policies like student loan forgiveness, Medicare for All, and a Green New Deal.

“We're thrilled to work with her and delighted to welcome her into our community.”

Omar's IPS connection should raise all sorts of alarm bells.

For many years, the IPS was the largest and most influential of the far-left think tanks in Washington. From its founding in 1963, it steadily pushed a pro-Soviet line on foreign policy, defense, and the economy.

In a 1978 article in *National Review*, Brian Crozier, then director of the London-based Institute for the Study of Conflict, described the IPS as the “perfect intellectual front for Soviet activities which would be resisted if they were to originate openly from the KGB.”

The Letelier-Moffitt Award has its roots in Chile's bloody anti-communist counter-revolution of

In giving out the Letelier-Moffitt Award, Omar is in effect honoring the memory of a paid Cuban agent-of-influence.

Right from the start, the IPS built networks of contacts among congressional legislators and their staff, academics, government officials, and the national media. The IPS's main aim has always been to influence U.S. government policy in favor of the world socialist movement.

the early 1970s.

### Assassination

In 1973, at the request of the Chilean parliament, Chile's generals stepped in to remove pro-Castro socialist President Salvador Allende from office for alleged gross breaches of the country's constitution. Allende committed suicide in the presidential palace rather than surrender to the military. For several years afterward, the military brutally cracked down on Chilean socialists, communists, and terrorists. Thousands were imprisoned, many were executed, and some simply “disappeared.”

One of the victims of the anti-communist purge was Allende's former ambassador to the United States, Orlando Letelier. After a period of imprisonment, Letelier was allowed to leave Chile, settling first in Venezuela, then in Washington at the suggestion of IPS staffer Saul Landau, a personal friend of Cuban communist dictator Fidel Castro.

In 1975, Letelier became a senior fellow of the IPS, where he soon became a leader of the leftist resistance to anti-communist Chilean President Augusto Pinochet. On Sept. 10, 1976, Pinochet officially deprived Letelier of his Chilean citizenship.

Undeterred, Letelier carried on his efforts to bring down the Pinochet government. He was reportedly responsible for the cancellation of several major European loans to Chile, which made him a major enemy of the government. He was described by one of his colleagues as being “the most respected and effective spokesman in the international campaign to condemn and isolate” Chile's anti-communist government.

On Sept. 21, 1976, Letelier was traveling to work with an IPS colleague Ronni Moffitt and her husband. As they were driving down Washington's Embassy Row at 9.35 a.m. a bomb exploded in their car. Within an hour, Moffitt and Letelier were pronounced dead. Moffitt's husband survived.

It was later revealed that the bomb had been planted at the direction of Chile's intelligence service, the DINA.

During the investigation into the assassination, the FBI leaked documents to *The Washington*

*Times* columnist Jack Anderson, and others, which indicated that Letelier had been an Eastern Bloc intelligence operative. Letelier had also apparently been coordinating his activities with the Chilean government-in-exile, then based in communist East Berlin.

Letelier was reportedly working closely with Allende's daughter, Beatriz Allende, who was married to a senior Cuban intelligence officer. While working for the IPS, Letelier was being paid \$1,000 a month (no small sum in 1976) from Cuba's communist regime.

So in giving out the Letelier-Moffitt Award, Omar is, in effect, honoring the memory of a paid Cuban agent-of-influence.

### Marxist Ties

Today's IPS maintains strong ties to the DSA and other domestic Marxist groups. The IPS has several DSA comrades on staff, including Ashik Siddique, a research analyst with IPS's National Priorities Project, and John Feffer, co-director of IPS webzine *Foreign Policy in Focus*. The Metro DC DSA steering committee even holds its meetings in an IPS office.

Like Omar, the IPS is uncompromisingly pro-Palestine and anti-Israel.

Khury Petersen-Smith is the Michael Ratner Middle East Fellow at the IPS. He researches “U.S. empire, borders, and migration.”

Until earlier this year, Petersen-Smith was a leading member of the now-disbanded International Socialist Organization. According to the *Socialism 2016* conference website: “He has written about Black and Palestinian liberation and US empire for *Socialist Worker* and the *International Socialist Review*. He co-authored the ‘Black Statement of Solidarity with Palestine’ in 2015, which was signed by over 1,100 mainly communist Black activists, artists, and scholars.”

In April, Petersen-Smith, with his IPS colleague Noura Erakat, held an event with the Tufts University chapter of the far-left Students for Justice in Palestine, titled “Black Solidarity With Palestine.”

Veteran IPS staffer Phyllis Bennis runs the IPS's New Internationalism Project. In 2001, she helped found the U.S. Campaign for Pal-

estinian Rights. She advises several leading U.N. officials on Palestine and was twice in contention to be appointed the U.N. special rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territory.

Bennis was also a leading member of Line of March, a Marxist-Leninist group that supported first communist China and then the Soviet Union.

The IPS still maintains strong ties to Cuba and played a role in President Barack Obama's disastrous directive to ease sanctions on Havana, which probably saved the communist dictatorship from imminent collapse.

In July 2015, as the communist flag was raised over the newly re-established Cuban Embassy on 16th Street NW in Washington, Bennis and her IPS and ex-Line of March comrade James Early “joined in the delirious shouts of ‘Viva Cuba!’,” according to *The Washington Post*.

“It's an amazing moment,” Bennis told *The Washington Post*. “In the decades-long effort to normalize relations with Cuba, to stop the US attacks and hostility toward Cuba, we have not had so many victories. Suddenly we have a victory. The flag going up—that's huge.”

“For those of us who were committed to the values and the aspirations of the Cuban revolution,” said Early, raising that flag again “is a recognition of Cuba's right to sovereignty and self-determination.”

Right from the start, the IPS built networks of contacts among congressional legislators and their staff, academics, government officials, and the national media. The IPS's main aim has always been to influence U.S. government policy in favor of the world socialist movement.

It's no surprise to see the IPS welcome Omar into its radical bosom.

*Trevor Loudon is an author, filmmaker, and public speaker from New Zealand. For more than 30 years, he has researched radical left, Marxist, and terrorist movements and their covert influence on mainstream politics.*

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It is temperance that allows us to remain focused on the needs of others rather than on our self-perceived needs.

## How *Virtue* Leads to *Restoration*

CRAIG OSTEN & TIM GOEGLIN

**I**n recent years, Americans from across the political spectrum have bemoaned the loss of a virtuous society and the resulting divisions in our nation. For those of us who have grieved this loss, it seems like we have finally come full circle after decades of downplaying or even degrading the role of virtue in a stable and healthy society.

But this growing awareness of what we have lost begs the question: “How do we restore virtue in a nation when it has been lost?”

When we set out to write our new book, “American Restoration: How Faith, Family, and Personal Sacrifice Can Heal Our Nation,” we looked at the virtues that made America strong and that have been tossed aside over the past several decades. While our nation’s founders—like all humankind—were less than perfect, they understood that faith in God was the foundation of a virtuous society. They appealed to God as a transcendent source of virtue and universal values throughout our nation’s founding documents. As Benjamin Franklin, who was hardly virtuous in his private life, said, “Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom.”

Yet, over the past 60 years, we have found more and more ways to remove these virtues—which are faith-based—from the public square, to appeal to secular sources as our “inspiration,” and to mock those who try to live virtuous lives.

So, what is a virtuous society? It’s a society in which individuals learn to value personal duty and selflessness over entitlement and self-indulgence. Unfortunately, as the latter mentality has ascended, this “all about me” or “you do you” mentality has infected our marriages, families, and even our churches, while celebrating the “free expression” of our personal appetites, resulting in broken marriages, fatherless children, and the weakening of those institutions that bring people together.

Secondly, what are the virtues that make up a stable and healthy society? The first is prudence, which allows us to distin-

So, what is a virtuous society? It’s a society in which individuals learn to value personal duty and selflessness over entitlement and self-indulgence.

guish between right and wrong in situations we encounter daily. Prudence requires individuals to seek the counsel of others, as it is impossible for any one person to have perfect knowledge of every possible moral situation they may face. In many ways, prudence is the opposite of “pride”—a word that gets exalted in many aspects of our culture today—because prudence requires humility.

The second virtue is justice, which Aristotle defined as a “moral disposition which renders men apt to do just things and which causes them to act justly and to what is just.” The virtue of justice is not meant for us—it’s meant to be for others. It’s not justice when we claim that we have received injustice for some real or perceived wrong. Instead, it is justice when we stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves. It was justice, for instance, that led people to march for civil rights of African Americans in the 1950s and ‘60s because true injustice had taken place.

The third virtue is fortitude, which is the strength to choose good even in the face of difficulty and danger. It allows us to overcome our fears and remain steadfast in our principles despite the obstacles we face. It is the backbone that upholds justice and strengthens prudence.

Finally, the fourth virtue is one that we are particularly short of in 2019: temperance. It is the virtue that enables us to moderate our behavior. It’s temperance that keeps us from responding in anger when we are wronged or feel we have been attacked. It’s temperance that gives us the self-discipline to avoid those things that cause us to make bad personal decisions. It’s temperance that allows us to remain focused on the needs of others rather than on our self-perceived needs.

How do these four virtues play out in real life? It’s the virtuous husband and father who puts the emotional and physical needs of his wife and children above his own. It’s the virtuous member of the community who treats all people the same and stands against injustice. It’s the virtuous

citizen who chooses to stand for what is right—regardless of personal cost—rather than compromise for personal comfort. And it is the virtuous individual who practices restraint, being slow to anger, guarding his or her tongue, and avoiding those areas that may lead to destructive behavior. All of these virtues flow from personal religious faith, which encourages us to have a higher purpose in our lives besides ourselves.

If American restoration is to occur, we must once again become a virtuous society. If each of us practices virtue in our lives, we can be a guiding light to others to follow and ultimately embrace in their lives. That is why we wrote our book—to outline the various areas where restoration needs to happen and how we can get there—through the practice of faith and virtue in our lives.

If we can restore virtue in our society, we will see a cultural transformation and an America once again practicing self-sacrifice and respect for others, rather than elevating self over the needs of others—a country that is once again united instead of divided against itself.

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*Craig Osten has collaborated with several best-selling authors on more than a dozen books. A former political reporter and an ardent student of history, Osten graduated from the University of California–Davis and did graduate work at California State University–Sacramento and Fuller Theological Seminary.*

*Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.*



# THE EPOCH TIMES

TRUTH *and* TRADITION

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