

Mussolini Money Subsidizes Fascist Schools in California

By William Morgan

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 23.—

Dictator Benito Mussolini of Fascist Italy is spending thousands of dollars to publish and export books which are used in a chain of schools throughout California attended by American children of Italian descent.

This elaborate school system is under the direct supervision of a Mussolini agent, attached to the Italian Consulate in San Francisco, Signor Guiseppi Parantini who holds the ambiguous post of "Clerk for Cultural Service."

These facts were admitted to me by Signor Andrei Rinaldi, Italian fascist consul in San Francisco. This representative of Mussolini spoke of the schools with a bland air that implied there was nothing unusual or startling in his master's pouring thousands of dollars into California to indoctrinate American-born children with concepts totally hostile to the traditions of American democracy.

The admission came when the People's World interviewed the Consul to verify a report that teachers in the "Dopo Scuola" or afternoon school, were being paid in Italian Lira.

The Consul's office is on the 7th

floor of the Bank of America building at 550 Montgomery St.

HANDSOME BUT NOT DASHING

Signor Andrei Rinaldi is a handsome fellow over six feet tall, but too fat to be considered dashing. He wears an enameled fascist pin in his button hole, and prefaces most of his replies with a noise like a nervous squirrel pursued by black birds for stealing eggs: "tch, tch, tch, tch."

At the first mention of "Dopo Scuola," he broke in on the question:

"You know I'm really not expected to speak about some matters . . . such matters, and for full information you should contact my press bureau. At Washington, in the Embassy. Of course there is nothing secret about the schools. Absolutely nothing. I like newspaper men, and I shall tell you anything not considered confidential. Now there are no secrets. Tch, tch, tch, tch."

"Well, can you tell me how many there are?"

"Of course. I see no reason why I should not tell you that. There are 20. Tch, tch, tch, tch."

"I am told that each school has a teacher supplied by the Italian government and paid \$90 in Italian

lire per month."

"Oh dear me no, tch, tch, tch," he said raising his voice and looking away through a large window affording a beautiful view of Telegraph Hill and the Bay beyond. "The communities raise funds to pay the teachers. We only supply them with books. Why, we would supply anybody with books. They are harmless. That is, there is nothing objectionable in them. There are no secrets."

Before I could raise the next question, he answered it.

"Of course we supply a superintendent from this office. He is attached here."

SIGNOR PARANTINI ENTERS

"What's his name?"

Rinaldi took his eyes away from the view for a moment, picked up a pencil, and began shuttling it back and forth.

"Tch, tch tch . . . Parantini."

"You say Parantini is attached to the Consulate?"

"Yes."

"What's his title, his official title?"

"Clerk for Cultural Service."

"And you say he is the Superintendent of the Schools?"

"Oh no. Tch, tch, tch. Each school has its own superintendent.

Mr. Parantini is invited in from time to time by the school itself to assist in problems. They call for him. The communities raise the funds to pay the teachers."

In the Italian North Beach colony, Parantini is known as the Director of Gruppi Giovanili, which is variously known as the Italian Boy Scouts and Mussolini's Wolf Cubs corresponding to similar groups of a distinctly military nature in Italy.

They came into existence here shortly after Mussolini suppressed the labor unions in Italy. The Wolf Cubs were active in persuading their mothers to give up gold wedding rings and accept iron ones in return from Mussolini during the Ethiopian campaign. They also scoured North Beach basements and vacant lots for scrap iron collections to be sent to Italian armament plants. Bullets from this iron have found their way into the bodies of thousands of Ethiopians and defenders of Democracy in Spain.

No mention of this was made in the interview with his excellency. The time was short. Papers had to be signed. The interview was ended. Tch, tch, tch.

(Tomorrow: Visit to a Fascist school.)

22/10/20
11-20-20