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Title:

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6235R – Southern Conference Educational Fund, Inc.

Guest: M.G. Lowman, #3

Morphew: Introduction...executive secretary of circuit rides, inc...in a brief word, what is Circuit Riders?

Lowman: We're a group of individuals who expose and oppose the use of church facilities for socialistic, pro-communistic and other anti-American activities.

Morphew: In recent weeks the Jackson Daily News has published an expose of activities in Mississippi by a group known as the Southern Conference Educational Fund...you have been an active opponent for a number of years and I'd like to know what is this organization and why do you oppose it?

Lowman: I'm going to tell you what Southern Conference Educational Fund, Incorporated is in the words of the Senate Internal Subcommittee of the United States Senate. In 1954, this committee held hearing in New Orleans, Louisiana, which is the headquarters scene of Southern Conference Educational Fund, Incorporated. And this committee of leading Democrats and Republicans in the United States Senate, mostly lawyers, investigated Southern Conference Educational Fund, Incorporated, and said, "although it's professed interest in southern welfare is simply an expedient for larger aims serving the Soviet Union and its subservient Communist Party in the United States." And I am interested in this organization because it has a Methodist bishop as its president, Bishop Edgar A. Love, central jurisdiction of the Methodist church, Baltimore, Maryland, and has as its executive director, James A. Dumbrosky, who I believe technically is best described as a former minister of the Methodist church. Now this organization was a part, a parallel organization, the same group, along with Southern Conference for Human Welfare, which had been cited as communist as early as 1944.

Morphew: And when it was exposed, it sort of went out of existence and the Southern Conference Educational Fund filled the vacuum...

Lowman: That's right. One day, we had both organizations and the next day we only had Southern Conference Educational Fund, Incorporated, and the only thing they had changed was the date. They kept the same officers, the same telephone number, the same address, the same magazine, the same staff. They had a new emphasis on title, Southern Conference Educational Fund, Incorporated. And you might be interested to know something more about who are some of the other persons in Southern Conference Educational Fund, Incorporated, in addition to James Dumbrosky and Edgar A. Love.

Morphew: Yes, tell us something about that.

Lowman: Well, the Jackson Daily News has been giving feature attention to one, Carl Braden. Carl Braden was identified in testimony under oath in both federal and state hearings, the state of Kentucky and then the House Committee on Un-American Activities. He was identified as part of the communist apparatus, a member of the Communist Party. Now, this is not me saying he is a communist or was a communist, this is privileged hearing information in a state court and also in a legislative investigative hearing in Washington where Carl Braden was identified as a communist. And in addition to Carl Braden being identified as a communist, there is also on the published list of staff persons of Southern Conference Educational Fund, an Episcopal rector by the name of William Howard Melish who was also identified in other hearings by Louis Budenz as a person Budenz knew as a communist. So, here's an organization set up to look like it is helping the race situation, but in reality is charged with being a part of the communist apparatus and has been so charged since 1944.

Morphew: In other words, the JDN expose that Carl Braden has been active in Mississippi conducting so-called workshops among Negroes and...

Lowman: Dissident whites.

Morphew: Yes...that the communist apparatus has moved into this field in Mississippi...

Lowman: Well, it doesn't mean they moved in as of that time because they were here before Carl Braden. Your state has been worked by James Dumbrosky and others in Southern Conference for Human Welfare, Southern Conference Educational Fund, Incorporated, long before Carl Braden came into the picture. But Carl Braden is one of the more recent additions in recent years and a very active person, having met with many persons in Mississippi and you have all an obligation that you must recognize. You're greatly indebted to the Jackson Daily News for making this important expose.

Morphew: What significance does this have outside of the immediate area...suppose a few people do get together under communist auspices...what significance could this have?

Lowman: Well, in 1928, the Communist Party, the international leadership, ordered the American party to go get the American southern Negro, and there is an unbroken chain of printed matter exceeding any other field and subject in the communist activity in America since that date, that the communists have carried on. And this great program of the communists throughout the whole Gulf State area to incite different groups and classes and races against each other is part of the program of upsetting America and dividing America.

Morphew: So the program is not taken under any genuine interest to advance the Negro in the South or anywhere else in the nation

Lowman: Well, according to the Senate Internal Security Committee, it's very clearly the opposite, it's to exploit the grievance field and the grievance subject, and while we're using the word 'exploit,' I'd like to know when the Episcopal bishop and the Methodist bishop and anyone, particularly in Mississippi and Louisiana, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, are going to do something about people of their denomination in good standing, as clergymen, being officers or salaried staff members of a cited organization set up for the purpose, according to the government of the United States of making trouble between the races. I'd like to know what the bishop in Mississippi is going to do about it. There is a great hue and cry about these troublemakers filing charges, making statements, I would say it's about time for the people in Mississippi to let their bishop know they're tired of supporting an apparatus that shields by not exposing this infamous Southern Conference Education Fund and exposing Bishop Edgar Love. The Circuit Riders, the group which I represent has 39 incidents of pro-communist and communist-fronting, witting or unwitting, whichever you want to call it, or whichever it might happen to be in the case of Bishop Love. But Bishop Love wanted many things done in many causes not related to the Methodist church or Christianity, such as the release of the Rosenbergs and a great number of these causes, releasing Morton Sobell from jail, and getting the identified communist rector, William Howard Melish a brief of amicae curiae. So, in the South, in particular, there is an exploitation of college professors, for example. In Texas, more college professors have had their names appear in public print support of Southern Conference Educational Fund, Incorporated, than all other fronts combined. And all the way across the South, you'll find both Negro and white professors, ministers, and some other professional people mixed up in formal office-holding, committee-holding positions or sponsors of movements and actions on the part of Southern Conference Educational Fund, and right in the state of Mississippi some few, three, four, five editors, publishers, who are always embroiled in fighting the anticommunists who come into the state or who live in the state. You'll find these people well-acquainted with and able to get along with Carl Braden and James Dumbrosky, but they can't tolerate any of you anticommunists in the South.

Morphew: We've heard about the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee which was put out of business by Tennessee because it was exposed as a communist training ground...is there any parallel between it and its director Miles Horton and the so-called workshops being held in Mississippi by Carl Braden?

Lowman: If the state of Louisiana, either its attorney general or some county prosecutor, parish prosecutor, were to start a proceeding to evaluate the program of Southern Conference Educational Fund, in other words, show what this organization has done, compare that with its charter under which it operates in the state, I think the same thing would happen in Louisiana that happened in Tennessee. The state would cancel the charter. But whether or not these politicians have the knowledge or the foresight or the fortitude, if you want to call it that, to do such a thing and recognize the responsibility to have a public examination hearing of this organization, it is incumbent upon the local political, the local civic, and most certainly, the local leadership of the Protestant, Episcopal, and Methodist churches to end the effectiveness of this infamous Southern Conference Educational Fund in any southern state.