

## Spotlight on the unorthodox classroom techniques of the secretive sect

THE HIDDEN practices of the highly secretive religious cult, the School of Economic Science, were exposed yesterday in *The Standard*. Its puzzling links with other organisations have raised questions about its objectives. Today we show how the SES is educating more than 600 children in a highly unorthodox fashion . . .

FOUR independent schools in London are indoctrinating boys and girls aged from four to 18 with the philosophies of the secretive School of Economic Science.

The SES, an educational charity has been condemned by senior churchmen as "evil."

The schools involved are St Vedast School for Boys in West Heath Road, Hampstead; St Vedast School for Girls in Queen's Gate, Kensington; St James School for Boys in Chepstow Villas, Notting Hill Gate, and St James School for Girls in Queen's Gate.

The parents of many of the 600 pupils are members of the SES. But in other cases, some parents have been unaware of the links between the schools and the cult.

The schools were set up by members of the SES in the mid-Seventies under the umbrella of an educational charity called The Indepen-

dent Education Association

They are anxious to play down their links with the SES. No mention of the movement is made in advertisements or the schools prospectus.

But *The Standard's* investigations have revealed that the five directors of the charity are all SES members.

They include Mr Roger Pincham, chairman of the board of governors, a former Chairman of the Liberal Party who is standing for Parliament today in Leominster, Herefordshire.

Virtually all members of

staff at the schools are SES members, all the school buildings used are owned by the SES. SES philosophy is taught in the classroom, and senior pupils are encouraged to join philosophy courses run by the movement.

The aim is to render the boys "effective, intelligent and responsible members of society." The girls' roles are defined as becoming "useful, intelligent and responsible members of society" as well as "trained to serve and be helpful to others."

The schools add that spiritual nourishment is pro-

vided by introducing pupils to the "great religious and philosophical teachings."

But their introduction within the curriculum is largely the SES's own interpretation of those teachings.

The subtle difference between the emphasis placed on the education of the boys and girls accords to an SES view of the world where the woman's role is simply a supportive one.

The study of Sanskrit is compulsory, once children can read and write in English. The emphasis on Eastern religion

has included some children being taught that Lord Shri Krishna, the Indian god, is greater than Jesus.

The children are also taught to revere Leon MacLaren, a former barrister who is the present day leader of the SES.

Perhaps most worrying of all in the boys schools is the emphasis on corporal punishment. Caning is the norm for serious offences, and at St Vedast cold showers are used, even in winter, as a punishment for unpunctuality.

One mother with a son at St Vedast School for Boys told *The Standard*: "They are indoctrinating the pupils. I feel my son is going away from me. He says I am wrong and the school is right,

when I try to talk to him about what they teach."

Another father, with two children at the same school, said: "Before they went to the school my sons were very happy boys. Now they stay by themselves in their room. They are definitely changed.

"I didn't know anything about the School of Economic Science when they started going there."

Mr Pincham, a member of the SES for 30 years and chairman of the IEA governors, told *The Standard*: "The provision of a rounded and successful education is our overall object.

"I can assure you that our children are not turning into religious fanatics, but I hope that the approach is away from the idea that the Creator is remote or contained within any one religion."

On the question of whether parents were told of the links between the schools and the SES, Mr Pincham said: "The head teachers assure me that the great majority and probably all the parents are aware of the link."

● IF YOU know of subjects that you think merit investigation, contact Peter Hounam or Andrew Hogg at *The Standard*, 118 Fleet Street, EC4, or telephone 353 8000, extension 3990.

# The SES and its strange schools

by PETER HOUNAM and ANDREW HOGG

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PETER GREEN — "We are not interested in inculcating ideas."

## "We want a man to be true to himself"

THE PRINCIPAL of the School of Economic Science is Mr Peter Green, joint chief surveyor of the Prudential Assurance Company Ltd, in London, who has been a member of the cult for 30 years.

He has held his position at the School for 15 years, is elected annually, and is also a trustee of the European Christian Industrial Movement.

Mr Green maintained that the School's only aim was to

encourage people to live to their full potential.

He stressed that the School had no political axe to grind, and added that members of the Fellowship, the 139-strong governing body, were strictly forbidden from profiting from their appointment.

At the School's headquarters in Queensgate he refused to answer questions about his own background, or reveal the identity of other Fellowship members.

He also declined to elaborate on who was responsible for

interpreting the message of the various philosophies adopted by the cult, and would not discuss the technique of meditation used.

"The real virtue of the School is enabling a man to grow to his full stature. I don't think we are interested in inculcating ideas," he said.

"All we are interested in is a man being free of ignorance. A man being true to himself."

Mr Green confirmed that some members of the SES had