

EDUCATION

Describe USSR Education

The need for the United States to emphasize and support science teaching is dramatized by the advances made by Soviet Russia's scientists and engineers.

➤ THE RUSSIANS pressure-cook their young students to suit the predetermined menu of the State. The United States permits its students to prepare themselves on an a la carte basis.

This, in essence, is the difference between the educational systems of the two nations as set forth in a 226-page illustrated book published by the U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The pre-sputnik study, entitled "Education in the U.S.S.R.", presents the most comprehensive report made to date on the Russians' educational mass-production.

"The report makes it clear that the Soviet Government is giving increased emphasis and support to education at all levels as an instrument to serve the political, military and economic goals of the Soviet State at home and abroad. It is also clear that Soviet education is making an increasing contribution to the Soviet objectives, particularly in science and technology," Lawrence G. Derthick, U. S. Commissioner of Education, said in releasing the book.

Cautioning that education as it is understood in the Soviet Union has no exact parallel in this country, Dr. Derthick warned "it would be tragic, therefore, if the evolution of education in the U.S.S.R. should be considered as any cause to question our basic concepts of freedom in education."

Soviet education is the best mirror today for seeing "what a given culture considers important, what its expectations are, and in what direction it is heading."

The study, two years in the making and including material from both American sources and Russian sources, highlights these facts about Soviet education from pre-school years to post-doctoral training:

1. The Russians concentrate in ten years about the same number of scheduled hours of instruction in their primary-secondary school set-up as the U. S. public schools do in 12 years. Russian schools are on a six-day-a-week schedule.
2. The Russians graduated 200,000 more high school students in 1956 than did the United States.
3. The number of Russian graduates from colleges and universities has jumped four times in the last ten years.
4. The Soviet State attempts through its planning mechanism to decide the number of skilled personnel needed in various fields for the most effective development of Soviet power, whether it be ballet stars, athletes or scientists and engineers.
5. Schools are opened, approved and run by the State. The Government allocates educational facilities, controls the teaching staff, determines the methods of instruction and the curriculum, and selects textbooks.

The report also points out that the educational system is under the surveillance of the secret police.

In comparing the Russian educational system with ours the report states that although both systems employ the principle of free and universal education, "authoritarianism characterizes the Soviet philosophical base; the goal of education is to meet the needs of the State."

In the U. S., on the other hand, "constitutional representative democracy characterizes the philosophical base on which the people of the U.S.A. govern themselves. In theory and in practice, the individual is of surpassing worth and the goal of education is the development of each person as an individual with freedom and with opportunity to choose his life's work in his best interests."

Science News Letter, November 23, 1957

MEDICINE

Finds Measles and Distemper Related

➤ THE VIRUS that gives a human a case of measles may be like the one responsible for giving dogs distemper.

The close relationship between the two diseases has been reported by Drs. John M. Adams, Veterans Administration Hospital, Long Beach, Calif., and David T. Imagawa, University of California, Los Angeles.

They found human serum taken from patients recovering from measles could protect mice completely from the effects of an otherwise deadly dose of distemper virus.

Serum taken from the patients when they were first getting the measles, however, did not protect the mice. It was not until neutralizing antibodies had been formed in the patients that their serum had a protective effect.

The scientists also found human measles virus could be neutralized the same way, using distemper antiserum that had been prepared in ferrets given shots of the distemper virus.

Other studies have also pointed to a possible biological relationship between the two diseases.

Both measles and distemper viruses produce the same characteristic changes in skin tissue and have the property of causing so-called giant cells with more than one nucleus.

This is the first report of an immunological relationship between the two viruses, and appears in *Proceedings of the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine* (Oct.).

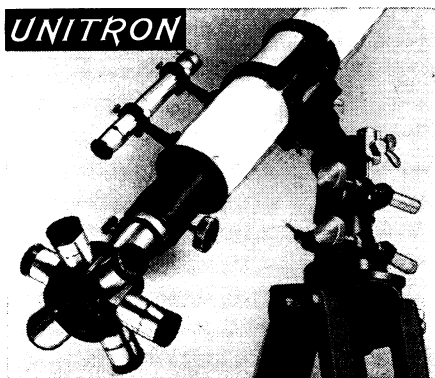
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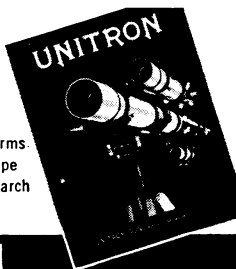
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