

to speak to you on this subject. I think it is unusual--in fact I know it is--that you would be asked to listen to a speaker, some of whose effusions you have already read. I know that you have received a revised version of a lecture that I gave a few years ago at the neighboring day school. I do not intend to say anything I said in that lecture, but to take off from that point, and go on and say a few things that have come to my mind in the intervening years.

In speaking of the relative strengths of American education and how it contributes to or is associated with national security, I do not intend to say much about the Soviet schools. I have said something in the lecture you already have. I would add one point. There is an appalling amount of misinformation about Soviet education which is being deliberately propagated within the United States.

Not long ago--within the last couple of years--a certain American critic appeared before a Congressional Committee and presented a series of examination questions in the field of trigonometry which were given to Soviet students at the end of the Ten-Year-School, for their certificate. And he asked them to ask their teachers if American children could do the same problems. The questions were clearly above the abilities of most American high school pupils. He not only showed the exams, he also stated that the Soviet students who took these exams have "mastered the subject and it is theirs for life." You can imagine how this statement looks to persons who know the actual Soviet situation. The major journal of the Soviet educators is Sovietskaya Pedagogika published by the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the RSFSR. In the issue for the month in which this statement was made by this critic there was an article by N. K. Goncharov, who is the Vice President of the Academy, saying of the typical Soviet student that what he does is memorize answers to questions which he then forgets as soon as the exam is passed and that this is the typical Soviet situation.

I wonder whether a man who is the Vice President of the Academy of Teaching Sciences of the RSFSR is less well-informed than an American critic. I also wonder why, when this material was presented to the Congressional Committee, it was not also said that these questions are printed in booklets which are sold in Soviet bookstores from 3 months to 6 weeks in advance of the examination, and that the students know not only that these questions are going to appear on the exam but that they are going to have a choice of the questions.