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Education in the U.S.S.R.

By

YEVGENY MEDYNSKY

Member of the Academy of Educational Sciences of the U.S.S.R.

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Contents

AIMS AND TASKS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE U.S.S.R.

THE Soviet Union's educational system differs fundamentally from all other systems, both in pre-revolutionary Russia and present-day capitalist countries. This difference follows logically from the very nature of the U.S.S.R., which is a State of a new type, a Socialist State.

The aims and purposes of public education in any country are determined by the character of the State: whatever the character of the State, that is the character of public education. The leader of the Soviet people, Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin, in an interview he granted H. G. Wells, said that "education is a weapon, the effectiveness of which depends on whose hands it is in".

The ruling classes of tsarist Russia, the landlords and capitalists, were least of all interested in raising the cultural standards of the people. On the contrary, the men who ruled pre-revolutionary Russia took the view that a downtrodden and ignorant people could all the more easily be kept in submission. It was their deliberate policy to prevent the workers' and peasants' children from acquiring knowledge. Only the elementary schools were open to them, and the vast majority of children, for various reasons, could not avail themselves even of these.

The entire system of public education was so conceived as to prevent children of working people from continuing their education once they had completed the elementary school course. Indeed, children who graduated from elementary school could not enter a secondary school, which was reserved for the sons and daughters of the well-to-do only.

In 1887, the tsarist Minister of Education, Delyanov, issued an order which barred from the *gymnasiums* (secondary schools) "children of coachmen, footmen, cooks, washerwomen and the other lower classes". Moreover, the Delyanov decree laid down the cynical dictum that persons belonging to these classes "should not strive to acquire a secondary or higher education".

Schools in tsarist Russia, to use Vladimir Lenin's apt and precise definition, were "entirely transformed into a weapon of class domination of the bourgeoisie, they were thoroughly saturated with the caste spirit of the bourgeoisie and pursued the aim of providing the capitalists with servile hirelings and competent workers".

But Russia was by no means an exception in this respect. Lenin's definition of the class nature of the school is fully applicable to any bourgeois State. The policy of limiting and restricting the education of the working people is typical of all capitalist countries without exception, including the countries that make such a show of their supposed "democracy".

Every capitalist country has separate schools for the various classes: there is one school for the children of the poor, and another for the children of the rich. In France, for instance, only the elementary schools are within the reach of working-class children, who are barred from the secondary school, the *lycée* and *collège*. They are open only to the sons and daughters of the bourgeoisie.

England, too, has its caste schools, notably Eton and Harrow, open in practice only to the privileged classes. In the United States, where the entire population is supposed to enjoy "equal" educational opportunities, secondary and higher education is, in fact, available only to the rich, who can afford to pay for it. Most working-class children must be content with elementary schooling. Negroes in the U.S.A. are segregated and cannot study in the same schools as whites.

The fundamental difference between public education in the Soviet Union and the educational systems in the capitalist countries lies primarily in the fact that education in the U.S.S.R. is really **public,** i.e. it is within the reach of the entire people, and in all its aspects serves the interests of the people.

The Soviet State is vitally interested in bringing culture and knowledge to the widest sections of the population, to the entire people. Nor could it be otherwise, for the U.S.S.R. is building a new social system, Communism, the most perfect system of society known to history.

This world-historic task can be successfully accomplished only by a people which possesses a high standard of culture, which has mastered all the achievement of science, the arts and literature. The founder and leader of the Soviet State, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, said that "a man can become a Communist only when he has enriched his mind with the knowledge of all the wealth accumulated by mankind".

Comrade Stalin has always devoted, and continues to devote, great attention to education. Addressing the Eighth Congress of the Young Communist League of the U.S.S.R. in 1928, Comrade Stalin said: "In order to build, one must have knowledge, must master science; in order to acquire knowledge, one must study, study persistently and painstakingly. . . . Before us stands a fortress—science, with its numerous branches of knowledge. This fortress we must capture at all costs. This fortress must be

captured by the youth if it wants to become the builder of a new life. . . ."

The Soviet Government's programme of action in the realm of public education can be expressed in the famous words of J. V. Stalin: "We want all our workers and peasants to be cultured and educated, and we shall achieve this in time."

In accordance with these tasks, the Soviet school knows no race, national, property, social or any other form of discrimination. Its doors are wide open to the children of workers and intellectuals, to young men and young women, to atheists and believers, to the youth of all sections of society, irrespective of race or nationality.

The education and training of the growing generation is regarded in the U.S.S.R. as one of the key functions of the State and is, naturally, subordinated to State interests. The Soviet school sets out to provide all-round development to its pupils, to train highly educated, active and conscientious builders of Communist society, to educate them in the spirit of Communist morality.

What concrete meaning is imparted to the concepts "Communist education" and "Communist morality"?

Conclusive replies to this question will be found in the works and pronouncements of the leaders and outstanding statesmen of the Soviet Union. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin pointed out that Communist education consists in devoting all one's strength and effort to the common cause, and that the root foundation of Communist ethics and morality is the struggle to destroy the old system of exploitation and strengthen and complete the building of Communism.

The late Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin, gave the following definition of the principles of Communist education:

"Communist principles, if we take them in their simple expression, are the principles of the highly educated, upright and forward-looking person, love of the Socialist Motherland, friendship, comradeship, humaneness, honesty, love of Socialist labour and a whole series of other lofty qualities understandable to one and all. The training of these traits, these lofty qualities, forms a highly important component part of Communist education."

In conclusion, let us cite the words of Andrei Alexandrovich Zhdanov, that outstanding Soviet statesman. In one of his speeches he said:

"The young Soviet generation will have the task of strengthening the might and power of the Socialist Soviet system, of making full use of the driving forces of Soviet society for a new and unparalleled flourishing of our material well-being and culture. To fulfil these great tasks, the young generation must be educated

to be staunch, optimistic men and women who fear no obstacles, who are prepared to face obstacles and who know how to overcome them. Our people must be educated men and women with lofty ideals, with high cultural and moral standards and tastes. For this purpose we must . . . raise the youth in the spirit of supreme devotion to the Soviet system, in the spirit of supreme fidelity to the interests of the people."

Different, but closely integrated facets of Communist education are mental, moral, aesthetic and physical training and polytechnical education.

Mental training and education develop a truly scientific, dialectical materialist outlook, provide systematic knowledge—the rudiments of the sciences—develop the pupil's memory, attention, imagination, independent thinking, speech, and his ability independently to acquire and apply knowledge.

Moral education aims at rearing in the pupil the traits of a courageous citizen of the Socialist State, one imbued with ardent love of his Motherland, and prepared to defend it against its enemies; one who is conscious of his civic duty, disciplined, persevering and sincere.

Aesthetic education seeks to inculcate in the youth the ability to understand and value the beautiful in nature and society, and to develop an understanding and appreciation of art.

Physical education is achieved through the physical culture lessons which form an integral part of all school curricula, extra-school activities (school sports circles), and through the activities of such centres as Young Pioneer clubs, Young Pioneer camps, children's tourist camps, etc. These activities promote the physical development of the pupil, train in him such qualities as strength, adroitness, stamina and alertness.

And lastly, polytechnical education—acquainting the young generation with the scientific principles of production and their practical application in industry and agriculture.

The Constitution of the U.S.S.R., which is called the Stalin Constitution in honour of its author, lays down, in Article 21, that "citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to education".

Similar clauses may also be found in the constitutions of other countries. But whereas in bourgeois constitutions this formula remains merely a declaration absolutely unsubstantiated and completely divorced from realities, the rights proclaimed by the Stalin Constitution are guaranteed by the achievements of Socialism, by the provision of all the material and legal conditions necessary for the exercise of these rights.

The right to education, as pointed out in this same article of the Constitution, "is ensured by universal and compulsory elementary education; by free education up to and including the seventh grade; by a system of State stipends for students of

higher educational establishments who excel in their studies; by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language, and by the organisation in the factories, State farms, machine and tractor stations and collective farms, of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people".

The U.S.S.R. devotes 14 per cent of its National Budget to public education, whereas in the U.S.A., for example, expenditure on education amounts to only 1.5 per cent, and in Great Britain to only 3 per cent of the budget.

Public education in the U.S.S.R. rests on the most progressive democratic principles. Briefly these are:

Complete equality of all nationalities: People belonging to any nationality have an equal right to enter any educational establishment in the country. Children of any nationality receive elementary and secondary schooling in their native tongue. Written languages have been created for the nationalities which prior to the October Revolution had no alphabets of their own. The possibility of indoctrinating chauvinism and misanthropic teachings is absolutely precluded.

Complete equality of the sexes: In all schools, both for boys and girls, tuition follows a uniform programme. Graduates of boys' and girls' schools enjoy the same rights. Girls are admitted to higher educational institutions on an equal footing with boys. Men and women school teachers receive equal pay and enjoy equal rights in respect to pensions, service bonuses, etc.

A State school system: All schools, and all other educational establishments, are founded, maintained and supervised by the State. This ensures uniformity in every branch of educational activities, correct planning, ample and stable material provisions, uniformity of curricula, and continuity.

Some educational establishments, though financed by public organisations (for example, by the trade unions), operate under the supervision of the State educational authorities. The State system of public education obviates haphazardness and overlapping in the organisation of educational activities, precludes any dependence of the schools on private or public charity, or the possibility of educational facilities being utilised for commercial or other purposes that have no bearing on the functions of the school.

Separation of the school from the Church: In the U.S.S.R., where the Church has been separated from the State, and the school from the Church, education is grounded on purely scien-

tific and materialist conceptions. Religious and mystical teaching of any description is precluded, both in the schools and in other educational establishments.

Universal and popular education: Universal compulsory education, free of charge, has been introduced for all the nationalities of the U.S.S.R. In the urban areas this covers seven-year schooling, and in the countryside (until 1949) four-year schooling. In 1949, universal and compulsory seven-year education was extended to include rural areas as well.

The network of secondary schools and secondary vocational schools is large enough to cater for all children of school age. The State helps its citizens in many ways to acquire education: it has introduced a system of stipends in higher educational institutions, it has provided hostels, dining rooms, etc., for students and school pupils.

Uniformity of the school system and continuity of all its links: Instead of the dozens of different types of schools which existed in Russia prior to the Revolution (and which exist today in the bourgeois countries), and which followed class and caste divisions in their structure and organisation, the U.S.S.R. has a uniform school system, equally open to all citizens of the U.S.S.R. regardless of nationality.

Similarly, the U.S.S.R. has no "blind alley" schools, the graduates of which are denied the opportunity of continuing their studies. There is complete continuity between all links of the Soviet educational system (elementary school curricula correspond to those of the first four grades of the seven-year and ten-year secondary schools, the seven-year school curricula correspond to the first seven grades of the ten-year secondary school).

This system enables every Soviet citizen to advance from the lower rung of the educational ladder to the highest, depending on his native talents and abilities, and quite independent of the material status of his family.

The school is associated with public life: Youth, trade union and cultural organisations, the collective farms and parents take an active part in the work of our schools and of other educational institutions. Parents' committees exist in every kindergarten and school. The Soviet public is in close touch with all problems of education.

THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION IN THE U.S.S.R.

THE general standard of literacy, the number of schools and pupils, are, as we know, the basic indications of the level of culture, and of the state of public education in any given country.

Viewed in this light, pre-revolutionary Russia was among the most backward of all countries. In 1913, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin wrote: "About *four-fifths* of all children and young people in Russia are *deprived* of educational opportunities! With the exception of Russia, there is no other such savage country in Europe in which the masses of the people have been so *robbed* of education, enlightenment and knowledge".

Official statistics reveal that in 1914 there were 8 million children and juveniles in all of Russia's schools, while 30 million remained illiterate. According to the 1897 census, only 24 per cent of all persons above the age of nine could read or write.

The level of literacy in the outlying areas of Russia, populated by non-Russian nationalities, was appallingly low. In Central Asia, for example, among the Uzbeks, Tajiks, Kazakhs, Kirghiz and Turkmenians, literacy stood at 1 or 2 per cent and in some cases at only a fraction of 1 per cent. Moreover, forty nationalities did not even have their own alphabets.

Such were the practical results of tsarism's educational policy, a policy detrimental to the people's interests.

Long before the October Revolution, the working people of Russia, led by the Bolshevik Party, demanded radical reform of the educational system. They called for the introduction of free, compulsory education, extension of the school system, development of vocational training, etc. However, these fair and just demands of the people were completely ignored by the tsarist Government.

The age-old ignorance of the masses was brought to an end only by the Revolution. Only a few days after that Revolution, in November 1917, the Soviet Government, in an appeal to the population, formulated the basic principles of its policy with respect to public education. It proclaimed that education of children of both sexes would be universal and compulsory,

made education free of charge, provided for the material well-being of teachers, etc.

Though the economic situation of the country was a difficult one, due to the civil war and foreign intervention, the young Soviet Republic accomplished a great deal in the education field even in the first years of its existence. Among other things, it opened a large number of new schools and teachers' training courses.

On the initiative of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, the Council of People's Commissars issued a Decree on December 26, 1919, calling for the complete elimination of illiteracy. This Decree made it obligatory on the population of the Soviet Republic, between the ages of eight and fifty, to learn to read and write in their own, or in the Russian language, as they chose.

Many thousands of people—school teachers, students, secondary school pupils, office employees and others—were enlisted in the nation-wide battle to wipe out illiteracy. Mention should be made of the important part played in this work by the Young Communist League, the Komsomol. Komsomol members, tireless propagandists for the elimination of illiteracy, helped to organise schools and themselves taught the illiterate and semi-literate.

Soon a wide-spread network of schools for illiterates sprang up throughout the country. In most cases these were evening classes conducted in the ordinary school buildings, in workers' clubs, or directly in the factories, villages and hamlets.

The classes ranged from twenty to thirty people to smaller groups of three to five, and in some cases instruction was individual. This was, in the literal sense, a nation-wide crusade against illiteracy, and it resulted in some 50 million people learning to read and write.

The development of public education was particularly intensive in the years of the first Five-Year Plan (1928-32). In the summer of 1930, J. V. Stalin, in his address to the 16th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, said: "The main thing now is to introduce compulsory elementary education. I say 'main' because such a change would mean a decisive step in the cultural revolution. And it has long been high time to begin this, because we have today all that is necessary to organise universal elementary education in the vast majority of districts of the U.S.S.R."

On August 14, 1930, the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. made a decision for the universal and compulsory schooling of all children above eight. Four-year education was made obligatory throughout the country, and seven-year education in the cities, industrial areas and workers' settlements.

In order to enable the children to attend school, the State set aside a special fund for material assistance to pupils. This fund was used to supply needy children with footwear and clothes, provide hot meals in the schools, organise hostels, etc. Extensive construction of school building began; the number of teachers' training courses and normal schools increased sharply, as did the publication of textbooks.

Beginning with 1930 the number of pupils in Soviet schools increased every year by from 3 to 4 million. This increase is shown in the following table:

	1928-29	1929-30	1930-31	1931-32
Number of elementary, seven-year and secondary schools (in thousands)	124.8	133.2	152.8	168.1
Number of pupils (in millions)	12.0	13.5	17.6	20.9

There were 7,600,000 people studying in schools for illiterates in 1932, and a similar number in schools for semi-literates. From 67 per cent at the close of 1930, literacy among the population increased to 90 per cent at the close of 1933.

In 1934, J. V. Stalin, summing up the results of our work in the cultural field, pointed out: "During this period, the U.S.S.R. has become radically transformed. . . . From an illiterate, ignorant and uncultured country it has become—or rather it is becoming—a literate, and cultured country, covered by a vast network of higher, intermediate and elementary schools teaching in the languages of the nationalities of the U.S.S.R."

The school system and the student body continued to grow steadily in the years that followed. In five years alone, from 1933 to 1938, over 20,000 school buildings were erected. In 1938-39 the U.S.S.R. already had 171,579 schools (elementary, seven-year and secondary), with an aggregate attendance of over 31,500,000. This was four times more than before the Revolution.

The development of culture was particularly rapid in areas which were the most backward in the days of the tsardom. This applies, for example, to the Uzbek Republic, where the number of schools increased twenty-eight times over as compared with the pre-revolutionary period, and the number of pupils seventy times. The rate of development was even higher in Kirghizia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenia.

Before the war, the Soviet Union ranked first in the world in school attendances. It had 1.2 times more pupils than Great Britain, Germany, France and Italy taken together. Its 750 higher educational establishments had a student body of 620,000. Leningrad alone had more university students than the whole of Fascist Germany.

The war and German occupation did great damage to the Soviet school system. The Hitlerite barbarians mercilessly destroyed schools, children's homes, museums, libraries and universities in the invaded territories. It will be recalled that, all in all, the Nazis burnt down, destroyed or plundered in the occupied territories 82,000 schools with facilities for 15 million pupils, 334 higher educational establishments, hundreds of museums, thousands of clubs and libraries.

The network of schools was substantially contracted during the war years. But even in war-time Soviet schools did not abandon their functions for a single day. The Government continued to devote great attention to public education. During the Great Patriotic War a number of important decisions were adopted which helped to implement universal obligatory schooling and improve the general functioning of the school system.

In 1943, stricter control was instituted over school attendance. Beginning with the 1944-45 school term, in the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, and in several other Republics, the school-entering age was lowered from eight to seven, with the result that first-grade attendance increased by several million.

Separate schools were established for boys and girls, a system of matriculation examinations and diplomas was instituted for graduates of the secondary school; honour students are awarded gold and silver medals upon graduation.

The Soviet people are rapidly repairing the ravages of the war. The result of intensive and energetic efforts on the part of the Soviet State has been the restoration of the entire school system within a remarkably short space of time.

The U.S.S.R. has at present 220,000 schools with 34.5 million pupils. At the beginning of 1949 its 837 higher educational establishments were attended by 770,000 students, not counting 298,000 extension course students, a marked advance above pre-war.

A comparison of the development of the Soviet school with the fate of the school in bourgeois countries is highly instructive. In the U.S.S.R. public education is advancing from progress to progress. In the United States, on the other hand, a country which, far from suffering from the war, amassed incredible riches from war contracts, the school system is retrogressing and steadily declining.

Official U.S. statistics show that between 1930 and 1945, school attendance dropped by 2,750,000 though the population increase was substantial. At present the number of illiterates in the United States has reached the 10 million mark. Over 6 million boys and girls are unable to attend school.

THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF THE U.S.S.R.

THE Soviet Union's system of public education caters to citizens of every age, beginning with pre-school. The system consists of the following component parts:

Pre-school establishments: These are intended for the very small children and include such institutions as mother-and-child welfare centres, children's consultation centres and nurseries. All of these institutions, which are under the Ministry of Public Health, are meant for children under three.

The consultation centres, staffed by medical specialists and trained educationalists, afford every mother constant aid in the upbringing of her children, who are under regular medical observation. The services of these centres are, of course, free of charge.

Mothers working in factories and offices can leave their children in the day nurseries, knowing that they are always under the care of competent personnel.

The next link in the system are pre-school institutions for children between the ages of three and seven. These are the kindergartens and playgrounds. Kindergartens are open all the year round, playgrounds are seasonal, and function mainly in the summer. Working mothers can leave their children here during the day. As in the nurseries, all kindergarten children receive regular meals.

The general school is made up of three divisions: the elementary, seven-year and secondary school. The elementary school has four grades, the seven-year school seven grades, and the secondary school ten grades, though in some of the Republics, notably Georgia, Latvia and Estonia, the course is eleven years.

The curriculum of the elementary school is the same as for the first four years of the seven-year and secondary school, and the curriculum of the seven-year school is the same as that of the first seven grades of the secondary school.

Elementary and seven-year schooling is universal, compulsory and free of charge. Until recently, seven-year schooling was compulsory only in the towns, but beginning with 1949, with the increased material well-being and enhanced culture of the

collective farm peasantry, compulsory seven-year schooling is being introduced in rural areas as well.

In addition to the general schools there are the **special secondary schools** for children with talents in music, painting, etc., which provide an artistic education in addition to the ordinary school course.

Forest schools and sanatoria schools have been opened for children in delicate health. There are also special types of schools with longer periods of training for the blind, deaf and dumb and mentally backward. Irrespective of whether these children have parents or not, they live in hostels attached to the schools, the State defraying all costs of their tuition and upkeep.

Other component parts of the general school system are the **young workers' schools** in the towns and similar **schools for young peasants** in the villages. There are also **evening schools for adults.** All these offer complete seven-year and secondary school education.

Orphans are taken care of in **children's homes** which similarly are financed entirely by the State.

The education the child receives in school is extended and supplemented by wide-spread **extra-curricular facilities**. These include a large number of Young Pioneer palaces and recreation parks, tourist centres, young naturalist centres, clubs for young technicians, etc. All of these institutions are financed by the State.

Elementary vocational training is designed to train skilled workers. It is provided through the system of vocational schools run by the Ministry of Labour Reserves, which give the pupil a general education in addition to teaching him a craft or trade. But apart from these schools, there is a great variety of evening classes, courses, etc., for vocational training directly at the factories.

Secondary vocational training (technical, agronomical, pedagogical, economic, medical, art, etc.), is provided by our technical schools, teachers' training schools, art schools, medical schools, open to seven-year school graduates of both sexes.

Higher education in all fields is provided by numerous universities, institutes, academies and other establishments of higher learning. They are open to all persons possessing a finished secondary education.

An important feature of Soviet education is the large variety

of cultural facilities—clubs, libraries, museums and lecture centres—established since the Revolution in every part of the country. In addition to recreation, they afford a wide range of opportunities for self-education.

This far-flung and comprehensive network of educational institutions is supervised by several Ministries and other Government bodies.

The pre-school institutions, the general schools, elementary, seven-year and secondary schools, as well as evening schools for adults, schools for young workers and peasants, children's homes, special schools and all extra-curricular facilities come under the Ministries of Education of the Union Republics and of their local bodies, the Public Education Departments.

General organisational and pedagogical supervision of secondary vocational schools and of all higher educational establishments is exercised by the Ministry of Higher Education of the U.S.S.R. In respect to finance, supply, etc., some of the higher educational establishments (pedagogical, art, medical and certain others), and all secondary vocational schools come under the jurisdiction of the appropriate Ministries and other Government bodies.

The Ministry of Labour Reserves of the U.S.S.R. has charge of the elementary vocational training system which includes trade schools, railway and factory training schools.

Educational and cultural facilities for adults, such as clubs, libraries, museums, lecture centres, come under the jurisdiction of Committees for Cultural and Educational Institutions of the respective Union Republics.

After this brief survey of the structure of public education in the U.S.S.R., we shall examine separately each of the divisions that make up the system.

PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

BEFORE the Revolution, Russia had, in all, 285 kindergartens, which with a few exceptions were run privately for solely commercial reasons. The charges were very high, a circumstance which made them accessible only to the children of the rich. The number of free, so-called "people's" kindergartens was no more than fifteen for the whole of Russia. The total attendance in all kindergartens was only 7,400.

The U.S.S.R. has over 25,000 kindergartens, not counting the summer kindergartens, with a total attendance of approximately 3,500,000.

Pre-school education in the U.S.S.R. is designed to give children between the ages of three and six all-round development, to prepare them for school, and make it easier for women to enter industry and take part in the political, cultural and social life of the country.

Soviet pedagogical science has elaborated its own, distinct system of pre-school training. The Froebel and Montessori systems, so widely applied in bourgeois countries, suffer from very grave defects: they tend to drill the child rather than education him.

The celebrated "Froebel exercises", all the cutting of intricate patterns out of paper, weaving, building of complicated edifices with sticks and rings, the sets of blocks, cubes, etc., meant to cultivate the sight, hearing and other senses of the child, only bore kiddies, tire them out, and, of course, bear no relation to the realities of the child's life and environment.

Unlike these artificial systems, pre-school education in the Soviet Union pays special attention to the peculiarities and psychology of the various age-groups. It is based not on the education of some abstract child, but is concerned with the real child, with all the interests peculiar to his age, the alertness and buoyant spirit typical of childhood.

Soviet kindergartens ensure the children's proper physical development, train them in the elementary rules of hygiene, acquaint them with the world they live in by direct association with nature and people, by employing a wide variety of visual aids (coloured pictures, table games, etc.), through reading and other methods.

Much attention is devoted to cultivating the child's speech. The senior kindergarten group (for children of five and six) teaches the elements of counting and reading, gradually preparing the children for their first year at school. Music, singing, drawing and modelling, rhythmical movement—all these help to bring out in the child an appreciation of the artistic.

The child is taught to love the Soviet Motherland, is educated in the spirit of collective effort, is taught to like work; he is instructed in the elements of organisation, discipline and accuracy. He learns how to behave among other children and adults, and is brought up to respect older people, and love his parents.

The children are taught to be independent, to look after themselves, to be able properly to use and take care of things that come into their everyday life.

Games and play in general constitute the chief method of education in all Soviet kindergartens. In addition to games, which are subordinated to a definite method and system, the children are encouraged to work with building blocks and toys.

This helps to gratify and cultivate their imagination and initiative. The methodical aspect of kindergarten games is carefully thought out. Every game is calculated to develop the mental, moral, artistic and physical qualities of the child, broaden his general outlook, observation and alertness, develop adroitness and teach him to live and work in a harmonious collective.

Here briefly is a typical schedule of a kindergarten day: the children arrive between seven and ten in the morning, depending on when their parents begin their own working day. After breakfast comes the lesson hour, devoted to drawing or singing, games or rhythmical exercises, reading, story-telling, counting, or gymnastics.

The length of these lessons varies with the age groups: in the youngest group the lesson is from twelve to twenty minutes, in the intermediate group from twenty-five to thirty minutes, and in the senior group from thirty to forty minutes. The intermediate and senior groups have two such lesson periods daily.

After lessons the children are taken for a walk and outdoor games, usually in the kindergarten's own grounds. Sometimes there are excursions to public parks, to the woods or fields. In the summer the children spend part of their time working in the garden, watering and weeding the flower beds. Outdoor exercises and garden work afford an opportunity to observe plant and animal life and gradually teach the children how to look after plants.

After this comes the mid-day meal and a siesta of one and a half to two hours, followed by tea. From tea until about six or seven in the evening the time is again devoted to games and lessons, followed by supper, after which the children are taken home. In the summer all kindergartens move to the country.

Every kindergarten has its own parents' committee, elected once a year at a general meeting of parents. The committee acts as a link between the parents and the staff, which works in close contact with the committee and the parents generally. Consultations for parents and informal talks are a regular feature of the work. From time to time the kindergarten arranges entertainments, to which the parents are invited.

THE GENERAL SCHOOL

UPON reaching the age of seven or eight, every child, no matter where he lives or what nationality he belongs to, must attend school.

The elementary school has four grades. Its programme and curriculum (as in the seven-year and secondary schools) are worked out by the Government of each Union Republic, with due account to national peculiarities. However, there is no marked difference between the school programmes of the various Republics.

Class study is the principal form of the tuition in the elementary school, which has four forty-five-minute lessons a day. In the third class, five lessons are permitted one day per week, and the fourth class has three days with five lessons.

The school term begins in all schools, elementary, seven-year and secondary, on September 1, and is divided into four quarters: September 1 to November 5, November 9 to December 29, January 13 to March 23, and April 1 to May 20 for the first three grades, and June 5 for the fourth grade, which has graduation examinations. In this manner the pupils are given three vacations a year: winter vacations of two weeks, spring vacations of eight days, and a long summer vacation of three months.

The first week in the first grade is devoted entirely to informal talks by the teacher who tells the children about their school, finds out how many of them can read, takes them out for walks, shows them pictures, etc. In this way the children get accustomed to their teacher and school. Only after that do the actual lessons begin.

Instruction is in the native tongue of the given locality, but in all schools of the non-Russian Republics the study of the Russian language is obligatory from the second grade.

The basic methods of instruction are explanation by the teacher, informal talks, independent work by the pupil, such as use of text-books, writing and drawing. Visual aids (pictures, tables, models, etc.) are employed extensively and excursions for nature-study and geography are also important features. So are visits to museums and historical sites.

The study of the Russian language in the elementary school, or in the first four grades of the seven-year and secondary

schools, teaches the pupils to read and write correctly and acquaints them with those works of Russian literature that can be appreciated by a child of eleven. It develops the child's ability in oral and written expression and gives him a knowledge of the basic rules of grammar and spelling.

In arithmetic the pupils are expected to master addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, the metric system, measures of distance, time, etc., decimals and the rudiments of geometry. In addition to Russian (and the native language) and arithmetic, the elementary school programme includes nature-study, history, geography, gymnastics, drawing and singing.

Reading lessons in the first grade furnish an elementary knowledge of natural science, which, as a separate subject, is taken up in the fourth grade. In the one-year course the children learn about the properties of water, air, minerals, the soil, etc. Classroom studies are augmented by excursions and by the simplest practical experiments.

The study of history and geography is based on much the same principles. As separate subjects they are taken up in the fourth grade, but some elementary knowledge is imparted to the pupil in the second and third grades, through reading in Russian or in the native language.

The child's knowledge is assessed on the five-point system: five stands for excellent, four good, three passable, two poor, and one very poor.

Promotion from grade to grade takes place at the end of each term. Promotion to the second, third and fourth grade is without examination, on the basis of the pupil's marks throughout the year. Fourth-grade pupils undergo examinations in Russian and arithmetic, and, in non-Russian schools, in the native tongue.

The seven-year (incomplete secondary) school, as indicated by the name, consists of seven grades. The three senior grades are a direct continuation of the elementary school.

The seven-year school curriculum is shown in the table at the top of page 23.

In mathematics the seven-year school provides a systematic course of fractions, percentages, ratios. Algebra and geometry begin in grade six. Much attention is paid, in the study of mathematics, to linking up theory with practice, the idea being to teach the pupil to apply mathematics in the study of physics,

Number of hours per week

Subject	*1st grade*	*2nd grade*	*3rd grade*	*4th grade*	*5th grade*	*6th grade*	*7th grade*	*Total hours for entire course*
Russian and reading	15	14	15	8	10*	8*	6*	2,508
Arithmetic	6	7	6	7	7	2	—	1,155
Algebra, geometry ..	—	—	—	—	—	5	6	362
Natural science ..	—	—	—	2(3)	2	3	2	314
History	—	—	—	3	2	3(2)	2	314
Constitution of the U.S.S.R. ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	66
Geography ..	—	—	—	3(2)	3	2(3)	2(3)	346
Physics	—	—	—	—	—	2	3	165
Chemistry	—	—	—	—	—	—	3(2)	83
Foreign language ..	—	—	—	—	4	4	3	363
Physical culture ..	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	396
Drawing	1	1	1	1	1	1	—	198
Draughtsmanship ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	33
Singing	1	1	1	1	—	—	—	132
Total ..	24	24	25	27	31	32	32	6,435

* The course in Russian language in grades five, six and seven covers the systematic study of grammar, spelling and punctuation. Literature lessons acquaint the pupil with outstanding works of Russian letters. These lessons are an introduction to the course in the history of Russian literature which is studied in grades eight, nine and ten.

chemistry and astronomy, and also to practical technology and agriculture.

The natural science course covers botany and zoology. Class work is accompanied by laboratory experimentation, excursions, work with the microscope and practical gardening on the school plot. The natural science course is based on the materialistic doctrine of the eminent Russian scientist, I. V. Michurin.

Plant and animal life are regarded in integrated association with environment, are studied in the process of development. Plant and animal organisms are studied in connection with the functions they perform. The theoretical course of natural

science is closely associated with practical problems of agriculture and animal husbandry.

The study of history consists of a short course on the history of the U.S.S.R., the history of the ancient East, Greece and Rome, the Middle Ages and the early period of modern history up to the French bourgeois revolution of the eighteenth century.

The history course is so conceived as to give the pupil a concrete conception of the origin and development of each social system, knowledge of historical events, the rules that govern their development, acquaintance with historical personages. Running through the entire course is the conception of the progressive development of human society, the idea of the inevitability of the doom of old, obsolete systems and the victory of the new, more progressive social systems.

Study of the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. acquaints the pupils with the State structure of the U.S.S.R., the superiority of the Soviet State system, the highest form of democracy, over the State systems of bourgeois countries, shows the tremendous role of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in every sphere of political, economic and cultural life, its invaluable services in the development of the State in enhancing its might and in all the great achievements of the Soviet people.

The geography course helps to form in the pupil a materialist outlook, provides concrete knowledge of the world he lives in and its various countries, acquaints him with the physical geography of the U.S.S.R. and develops love for the Socialist Motherland.

In physics the pupils of the seven-year school acquire basic knowledge in mechanics, heat, electricity and light. The study of chemistry begins in grade seven.

The seven-year Soviet school gives the pupil a much wider scope of general knowledge than, say, the eight-year elementary school in the United States. For example, in the Soviet school the arithmetic course is completed in the sixth grade, in the United States in the eighth grade. Moreover, in the American school arithmetic is regarded not so much as a systematic theoretical course, but as a narrow, utilitarian course of business arithmetic adapted mainly to commercial and banking purposes. Physics and chemistry, which in the Soviet school are given 250 hours, are not studied at all in the American elementary school.

Nor does the American eight-year school provide systematic courses in natural science, history and geography, which play such a prominent part in Soviet schools, where they are studied in full and persistently over a number of years. In America history and geography are merged into a general course of

social science which gives the pupil only very fragmentary knowledge of the subject.

This is illustrated by the school curricula of Montana and North Carolina, which provides for only a very superficial study of ancient history, the Middle Ages and the early period of modern history. Moreover, the whole course is compressed into a single year. In the Soviet seven-year school these three divisions of history cover a three-year study course.

The secondary school has ten grades, of which the first four grades fully coincide (in curricula, programme and age groups) with the elementary school, and the first seven grades with the seven-year school. The pupil enters the first grade at seven and graduates at seventeen.

The development of secondary education in the Soviet Union has been prodigious. In 1914 Russia had 1,953 secondary schools (classical *gymnasiums*, commercial and the so-called realistic schools) with a total of 635,591 students. In 1939 there were 12,469 secondary schools in the Soviet Union with 9,028,156 students.

This growth has been particularly pronounced in the rural areas. From 1933 to 1938 the number of students in the senior classes of the secondary school increased 10.1 times, but in the rural secondary schools the increase was 36.3-fold.

Very radical changes have taken place also in the composition of the student body. The percentage of girl students increased from 37.6 in 1928 to 51.6 in 1938. This is a direct outcome of the changed status of women under Socialism. Characteristically enough, even in the schools of Central Asia, in areas where in the past religious prejudices and general backwardness kept women in a State of ignorance, girl students already make up over 40 per cent of the total. Such are the results of the Lenin-Stalin national policy which brought liberation to all the peoples of the Soviet Union.

At the present time there are two forms of secondary schools in the U.S.S.R.: separate schools for boys and girls and co-educational schools. Separate schools exist in all the large cities, co-educational establishments remain only in the smaller towns and in the countryside.

Since the curricula of the first seven grades of the secondary school, as indicated above, are identical with the curricula of the seven-year school, the table that follows covers only the three senior grades (eight, nine and ten) of the secondary school.

Number of hours per week

Subject	*First 7 grades*	*8th grade*	*9th grade*	*10th grade*	*Total*	*Total hours for course*
Russian language and recitation	76	—	—	—	76	2,508
Literature	—	5(6)	6	5	16.5	544
Arithmetic	35	—	—	—	35	1,155
Algebra, geometry, trigonometry	11	6	6	6	29	990
Natural science	9.5	2	2	—	13.5	545
History	9.5	4	4	4	21.5	705
Constitution of the U.S.S.R. ..	2	—	—	—	2	66
Geography	10.5	3	2(3)	—	16	528
Physics	5	3	3(2)	4	14.5	478
Astronomy	—	—	—	1	1	33
Chemistry	2.5	2	3(2)	4(3)	10.5	346
Foreign language	11	4(3)	3(2)	4	22	726
Physical culture	12	2	2	2	18	594
Drawing	6	—	—	—	6	198
Draughtsmanship	1	1	1	1	4	132
Singing	4	—	—	—	4	132
Total	195	33	31	31.5		9,680

In 1948-49 the teaching of psychology and logic was introduced in 538 secondary schools in twelve of the larger cities; beginning with grade nine, two hours a week are devoted to psychology, and in grade ten two hours a week to logic. In the 1949-50 school term the study of these subjects was extended to another 149 secondary schools in Moscow, and to 2,313 schools in other cities of the R.S.F.S.R. In the 1950-51 school year psychology and logic will be taught in 3,192 rural secondary schools, as a result of which the number of class hours per week will increase to thirty-three; the number of hours devoted to physics and chemistry in grades nine and ten will be altered slightly.

The boys' *gymnasiums* in tsarist Russia (eight basic grades plus two preparatory grades) provided for 8,672 hours of class study throughout the entire course, which is 865 hours less than in the secondary schools of the U.S.S.R. The latter devote much more time to the study of Russian, literature, mathematics, natural science, physics, chemistry and astronomy.

The course in Russian language and literature in pre-revolutionary boys' *gymnasiums* covered altogether 1,286 hours, which is only half of what the Soviet school allocates. Physics were studied over a course of three years, as compared with five

years in the Soviet secondary school. Chemistry was not a separate subject: now it has 343 hours spread over four years.

A comparison of school programmes and curricula of the ten-year Soviet secondary school with the twelve-year school of the U.S.A. also does not favour the American school. To begin with, lessons in the Soviet school, unlike the American school, are held not five but six days a week. In ten years this adds up to an extra 330 school weeks, or 1,650 hours. The teaching of physics, chemistry, literature, natural science, history and geography in the Soviet school is much more profound than in the American school.

It is generally known that secondary schools in the United States provide for about 500 (!) subjects; in each school there are at least twenty-five subjects from which the pupil can choose. This system leads to a large section of the students selecting subjects of a practical nature (as often as not "easy" subjects).

Needless to say, this has an adverse effect on the general level of education. In many cases even mathematics (algebra, trigonometry) are not obligatory, and high-school graduates have a very sketchy knowledge of these subjects, usually limited to simple equations.

A Harvard University Commission, which made a special survey of public education in the U.S.A., found that only 15 per cent of all secondary-school students study natural science and geography, and a very small fraction take up physics and chemistry.

Literature is studied in the Soviet school in its historical development. The literature course sets out to acquaint the pupil with the significance of Russian literature in the development of Russian society, its kinship with the people and its patriotism. He learns to appreciate the great part it played in the liberation struggle of all the peoples, and to distinguish the ideological essence of any literary work, to understand its composition, subject matter, images and style. The pupil is acquainted with the basic periods in the development of literature, with its principal trends, and with the outstanding works of world literature.

In addition to botany and zoology, the secondary-school pupil studies anatomy and physiology and the fundamentals of Darwinism.

The study of general history, beginning with primitive society and ending with the history of our times, is spread over four years, and the history of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. over two years. The history course serves as an introduction to an understanding of the productive forces and their role in the historical process, of relations of production, the class struggle,

the Socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the outstanding role of the great Russian people in the history of the peoples of the U.S.S.R.

Economic geography of the U.S.S.R. and of the major foreign countries is studied in the senior grades. The ideological objective of the geography course in the secondary school is to form in the pupil a scientific-materialistic outlook, educate him in the spirit of devotion to his Motherland, help him understand that only the Revolution, only the Stalin Five-Year Plans made it possible to utilise the vast natural riches of the U.S.S.R. and completely transform our country. The geography course also strives to cultivate in the pupil respect for the working people of other lands.

Graduates of the secondary school have an all-round knowledge of physical mechanics, hydro and aero mechanics, heat, molecular physics, properties of solid matter, gas and steam, electricity and optics. Considerable stress in the physics programme is laid on practical laboratory work and on applied physics.

The chemistry course sets out to give the pupil systematic knowledge essential for scientific understanding of the natural processes and of the problems connected with the country's economic development. In particular the chemistry course acquaints the pupil with the scientific principle on which the various branches of the chemical industry are based, and helps to cultivate a comprehensive scientific world outlook.

The study of astronomy provides the pupil with knowledge of the structure, movement and development of heavenly bodies. Like natural science, physics and chemistry, the astronomy course is an important contributory factor in developing materialistic views among the youth.

Foreign languages—English, German or French—are taught in every secondary school beginning with the fifth grade (in Moscow with the third grade).

The distinguishing feature of the Soviet school—and its greatest achievement—is that it furnishes an integral, comprehensive and solid education, thoroughly scientific and free of all religious and idealistic influences.

Instruction in the Soviet secondary school is so organised as to link all the knowledge the pupil acquires with the practical experience and realities that surround him. In mastering the fundamentals of science, the student acquires a scientific conception of the world and of the laws that govern the development of nature and society. The high ideological level of tuition helps to cultivate in the student patriotism and lofty moral principles.

In this way the Soviet school prepares the younger generation for participation in Socialist construction.

Promotion from grade to grade in the secondary school is by annual examination (see "Examinations" p. 34). At the end of the ten-year course, pupils matriculate in the following subjects: Russian and Literature (Soviet literature and the main creative work of Russian 19th century classical literature); mathematics (algebra and geometry—oral, and trigonometry—written); and oral examinations in physics, chemistry, history of the U.S.S.R., and a foreign language. Students who excel are awarded gold and silver medals, entitling them to enter higher schools without examination. Pupils failing matriculation in not more than two subjects now have the right to be examined in these subjects a second time.

Class studies, and other forms of instruction, are greatly augmented by the wide scope of out-of-school activities conducted by the teachers and by the pupils themselves.

Student circles are a regular feature of all secondary educational establishments in the U.S.S.R. The academic circles cover such subjects as literature, geography, history and mathematics. And there are young naturalists' and young technicians' clubs, and a wide range of amateur art circles—dramatic groups, choirs, paintings and sculpture groups—as well as sports and physical culture circles.

All of them work under the guidance of the teaching staff, and meet once a week or once a fortnight after regular school hours. Work in these study and recreation circles helps to broaden the pupil's scope of knowledge and understanding, trains him in independent work and cultivates his aesthetic tastes.

Pupils' organisations have been set up in all seven-year and secondary schools. Their chief object is to induce better academic performance by the pupils and foster conscientious discipline. They encourage independent activities, organisation and initiative.

The director of the school exercises general supervision over all pedagogical activities. Beginning with grade four, every class has its class teacher, appointed from among the instructors of the given class.

All aspects of school work are carried out in collaboration with the parents. Periodical parents' meetings are held, both of the whole school and of each class separately, at which parents' committees are elected.

The methods applied in the Soviet school to develop responsibility and discipline in the pupil are explanation, encouragement and disciplinary action. Such "corrective" measures as corporal punishment (incidently, still practised in

some bourgeois countries) have been totally rejected by Soviet pedagogics and have absolutely no place in the U.S.S.R.

There is a uniform set of rules for pupils in all schools of the U.S.S.R. Formulated in twenty brief clauses, they define the duties of the pupil with respect to his school, its director and teachers, and with respect to parents and adults. These rules make it obligatory for the pupil to "work insistently and perseveringly to master knowledge in order to be a cultured and educated citizen and be of the greatest use to the Soviet Motherland."

The pupil must study diligently, always be on time for classes, obey every order of his teachers and school director, have a neat appearance, behave in school, out of school and at public gatherings, be polite and courteous, attentive to the needs of the older people, small children, the weak and invalids, and render them every assistance. He must obey his parents, assist them and help take care of his younger brothers and sisters.

The Young Pioneers and Young Communist League (Komsomol) organisations are the school's best helpers.

The Young Pioneers are a mass volunteer Communist children's organisation named after V. I. Lenin. They embrace children from the ages of nine to fourteen and their object is to help the school and the teachers, and to train the growing generation.

Every school has its Young Pioneer unit which is divided into detachments made up of pupils of one or several classes of the same grade. The detachments are in turn divided into "links". The Young Pioneer organisation affords children the opportunity of bringing out their native ability and talents. It provides ample scope for their interests and helps greatly in their mental and physical development.

The Young Pioneer groups organise talks on subjects of interest to the children, sing-songs, excursions and outings, games and sports contests. In the summer, the children go to Young Pioneer camps in the country.

The Young Pioneer organisation works under the guidance of the Komsomol, a mass non-party organisation of young men and women. The Komsomol devotes special attention to the school and demands that all its groups—and there is one in every seven-grade and secondary school—work to improve the quality of study and to achieve a high standard of scholarship.

By drawing the pupils into active social work, Komsomol and Young Pioneer organisations in the school help the teacher to bring up the children to become conscientious, educated citizens of the U.S.S.R., prepared to surmount every difficulty and barrier and to perform any duty required by their Motherland.

Special Schools: The Soviet Government makes special provisions for handicapped children. It is concerned that these children should not feel themselves outcasts but should become useful members of society. For this purpose special schools with hostels attached have been opened for the blind, deaf and dumb and mentally backward children.

The special schools provide both a general and vocational training. Their curricula follow that of the ordinary school, but the methods of instruction, text-books and aids are, of course, different and adapted to the needs of the respective type of school. Teachers for these schools are specially trained at the defectology departments of our pedagogical institutes.

For blind children there are special elementary, seven-year and secondary schools. In each case the course of tuition is one year more than in the ordinary school. Cases are not infrequent of blind secondary school graduates entering the universities or other higher educational establishments.

Schools for the deaf and dumb have a nine-year course and provide a general education equal to that of the elementary school, and vocational training. Extension of the course to cover the seven-year school began in 1943.

The term of study in the schools for the mentally backward is seven years, in the course of which the pupil receives an elementary school education and learns a trade; carpentry or metalwork for boys, sewing and other crafts for girls.

Children's Homes: The education and upbringing of orphans is regarded as an important task of the State. Special solicitude is shown for children who lost their parents in the war. The U.S.S.R. maintains a system of children's homes, and they really provide a home for the child. All expenses are defrayed by the State. The children receive a general education and vocational training.

Children's homes are of the pre-school type (for children of three to seven), and of the school type (for children from seven to sixteen). The children attend their neighbourhood school and study on an equal footing with the other pupils. In addition, they are taught work habits. Mention should also be made of the fact that amateur art activities are highly developed in all children's homes.

Schools for Young Workers and Peasants: These types of schools were organised at the height of the Great Patriotic War. Due to wartime conditions a fairly large number of young people were obliged to discontinue their schooling and take up work in industry. In order to keep our armies provided with everything they required, hundreds of thousands of young men

and women gave up their studies and took their places at the work-benches.

In 1943, the Central Committee of the Young Communist League requested the Government to provide facilities for these young people to combine work in industry with study. The Government decided to organise special classes for young workers in connection with the factories. A year later similar schools were opened in the agricultural regions for collective farm youth.

At present, there are two types of young workers' schools: incomplete secondary schools comprising grades five, six and seven; and secondary schools from grades five to ten.

Instruction follows the programme of the ordinary seven-year and secondary schools, and promotion is by annual examination. Students of the seventh grade are required to pass graduation examinations, and students of grade ten take the usual matriculation examinations.

Lessons in the young workers' schools are adapted to work schedules. Classes are held in the mornings, afternoon and evenings, depending on the working hours of the pupils.

The school schedule calls for sixteen hours of class study and four hours of consultation per week. Classes are held four times a week. Despite the fact that class studies comprise only two-thirds of what is allocated in the ordinary seven-year and secondary schools, practical experience has shown that the young workers successfully cope with their curriculum and upon graduation are able to pass the entrance examinations for the secondary specialised schools and universities.

The high degree of top-mark students in the young workers' schools is to be explained by the fact that these young people possess strong will power, perseverance and enthusiasm, and most important of all, an ardent desire to acquire knowledge. A large proportion are Stakhanovite workers with a keen feeling for the time factor and for organisation.

Another important contributory factor is the well-conceived and equally well organised programme of the schools. The State renders important assistance to these young workers, and grants them diverse privileges. For example, students of young workers' schools are exempt from night work and overtime, during examination sessions they are given time off with full pay, etc.

The present enrolment in young workers' schools is over half a million students; the number of students in young peasants' schools is approximately 750,000.

Extra-Curricular Facilities: The Soviet Union possesses a wide range of extra-curricular facilities for children. They cater

to the diverse interests of the child and help to extend and deepen his knowledge and develop his creative faculties. The activities in this field are an important and valuable supplement to the school educational process.

The Soviet Government has placed at the disposal of the children hundreds of palaces, recreation grounds, libraries and other institutions. In the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic alone, there are over 700 Palaces and Houses of Young Pioneers, 300 young technicians' centres, 200 young naturalists' centres, and many other institutions of a similar type.

Some idea of the scale and scope, as well as of the content, of these activities is provided by figures relating to the Leningrad Young Pioneer Palace. It is situated in one of the most imposing buildings of the city, the Anichkov Palace, erstwhile residence of the Russian emperors.

The Palace has 308 rooms and halls; its studios, laboratories, workshops, art circles and classes which are attended regularly by over 11,000 children, add up to a grand total of 700. There are special divisions for technology, science, artistic education, physical culture, several libraries, a large lecture hall, theatre, etc.

The Young Pioneer Palaces in Moscow, Kharkov, Yaroslavl and other towns are organised along very much the same lines.

In the Crimea, picturesquely situated on the shores of the Black Sea, is the famous Artek Young Pioneer camp, which is visited every year by thousands of children from all over the Soviet Union. There are children's summer camps in many other beautiful districts of the U.S.S.R.

Summer rest is provided also by special children's floating rest homes, which cruise the Volga. Children's railways, supervised and run by the youngsters themselves, have been built in many of the larger Soviet cities.

Children's libraries, which, in addition to supplying books, engage in a number of educational activities, arrange lectures, exhibitions, literary contests, recitations, etc., are to be found in every town of the U.S.S.R.

Young nature lovers are given every opportunity to gratify their interest at young naturalists' centres, which are under the direction of the Central Young Naturalists' Station in Moscow. Such eminent scientists as Academicians Lysenko and Tsitsin give advice and consultation to the work of the young naturalist.

Children's technical centres, tourist stations for those who are fond of travelling, children's athletic fields for the young sportsmen, special children's skating rinks, swimming pools, ski-ing centres, are others on the long list of out-of-school facilities available in all parts of the vast country.

Many cities have children's art centres, special children's theatres and puppet theatres, and many of the cinemas arrange special performances for children.

An important part in the education of children is played by the press. The U.S.S.R. has nineteen children's newspapers and fifteen magazines appearing in Russian and in the other languages of the Soviet Union. There are several publishing houses of children's literature, the largest of them being the State Publishing House of Juvenile Literature in Moscow. Millions of copies of books for children are being published.

Examinations: At the beginning of 1950 new universal regulations were adopted, covering "examinations for passing from one grade to another, and graduation examinations in primary, 7-year and secondary schools as well as matriculation examinations".

Under this new system pupils are no longer overburdened with examinations. Pupils in the sixth grade are now freed from the necessity of passing history examinations. In the seventh grade examinations in zoology and a foreign language will not be held. In the eighth grade there will be no examinations in history or anatomy.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

SOCIALIST construction on an unparalleled scale requires a very large number of skilled workers. In the Soviet Union, which knows neither economic crises nor unemployment, industry and agriculture are constantly expanding, and the demand for labour-power increases with every passing year.

In a planned Socialist economy the demand for labour-power can be met only by the planned training of skilled workers. This purpose is served by the Ministry of Labour Reserves, which has charge of the training of skilled workers for the various branches of the national economy.

Elementary Vocational Training: Thousands of vocational schools—trade schools, railway schools and factory training schools—have been opened in various parts of the country.

The trade and railway schools train skilled workers for the more complex professions: all-round lathe operators, steel-smelters' helpers, milling-machine operators, electricians, engine-drivers' helpers on the railway, etc. These schools are open to boys and girls of fourteen and fifteen with an elementary education. The term of study is from two to three years.

The factory training schools train workers of less complex professions: plasterers, carpenters, hewers, etc. The length of training here is shorter, ranging from five to twelve months. The schools are open to boys between fifteen and seventeen, and to girls between sixteen and eighteen.

All of these vocational schools are financed entirely by the State. The students are given living quarters, board, uniforms, footwear, linen, text-books and everything necessary for their studies. Upon graduation they are sent to work in their speciality and receive the same wages as other workers.

Instructing is so organised as to give the pupil not only knowledge of his prospective trade, but a general education as well. Thus, in the trade and railway schools, general educational subjects and physical training account for 25 per cent of the study time.

The general education course includes Russian, mathematics, physics, political science and draughtsmanship. Approximately 75 per cent of all the time is devoted to vocational training proper, but this covers also theoretical study in connection with practical work.

The school term is divided into four quarters. The school day is seven hours: two hours for general subjects and five hours for training in the given trade.

Trade and railway schools, as well as factory training schools, are supervised by a director and two assistants. Much attention is paid to advancing the ideological and political level of the pupils, teaching them discipline, good conduct and training them in the moral qualities that distinguish the Soviet citizen. At the same time a great deal is being accomplished in the artistic and physical development of the pupil.

The following figures are indicative of the importance attached in the Soviet Union to vocational training. In the eight years since the introduction of vocational training schools the State has spent roughly 11,000 million roubles on their upkeep.

Special cultural centres, some 600 clubs and several thousand libraries for pupils of vocational schools have been built at State expense. Between 1941 and 1949 trade and railway schools and factory training schools have trained over 4,500,000 skilled workers, all of them with a sound general education.

Every factory has its own technical circles and courses, at which the worker, especially the young worker, can acquire a higher skill or learn a new trade.

Yet another form of vocational training is team or individual instruction. Under this system, which has been widely applied, skilled craftsmen teach the newcomers in the process of work.

Secondary vocational training is provided through specialised secondary schools, of which there is a large number in every part of the country.

Before the Revolution, Russia had a total of 295 secondary vocational schools attended by 35,800 students. The U.S.S.R. has today a far greater number of these schools which give training to 1,200,000 young men and women.

The course of study in the specialised secondary schools is usually four years. Admittance is by examination. The schools are open to persons of both sexes between the ages of 14 and 30 with a completed seven-year education.

The schools possess well-appointed laboratories, workshops and consultation rooms. The method of instruction is by lecture, discussion, practical work and laboratory experiment, excursion and work in the workshops. Practical work in industry, agriculture, hospitals (for medical schools) and in schools (for pedagogical schools), figures prominently in the programme.

Graduates of specialised secondary schools are required to pass a State examination or submit a thesis. Upon finishing the course of study, they are assigned work in their acquired speciality. They can continue their education in the universities or other higher learning establishments if they so desire, but only after three years of practical work. However, honour graduates can enter the university immediately.

HIGHER EDUCATION

IT would be difficult indeed to overestimate the role and significance of higher education in the life of Soviet society. The Soviet higher school trains the country's intelligentsia, the men and women upon whom will devolve the task of advancing science, technology and culture, of educating the working people.

With the professional knowledge acquired in the higher school, the graduate is fully prepared to take up practical activity in his or her particular field.

The Soviet State, which is vitally interested in the maximum progress of culture, has created favourable conditions for higher education unknown in any other country.

Mention has already been made of the fact that since the advent of Soviet Power the number of higher educational institutions and their enrolment have increased many times over. But the development of higher learning in the Soviet Union is characterised not only by quantitative growth. The very nature of higher education, the principles and concepts on which it rests, have undergone radical change.

Higher educational institutions have been opened in areas the population of which was in the past deprived of facilities for elementary education, let alone advanced learning. It is not the sons and daughters of manufacturers and big landowners who study in our universities and institutions, but the children of workers, peasants and working intellectuals.

The whole system of instruction in the higher school has been completely overhauled and adapted to the needs of the Socialist State. Soviet universities, and higher educational institutions in general, give an incomparably more profound and comprehensive training than the corresponding institutions of tsarist Russia, or present-day universities in bourgeois countries.

The number of higher educational establishments in the U.S.S.R. today is over 800, including thirty-two universities. Universities have been opened in all of the sixteen Republics of the Soviet Union.

The object which universities set out to attain is the training of scientific workers for research institutes and highly skilled instructors for the secondary school. The larger universities have from 6,000 to 8,000 students. Each university has five or six faculties, the larger ones as many as nine faculties, and more.

Moscow University has twelve faculties: history, philology, philosophy, economics, law, geography, mechanics and

mathematics, physics, technical physics, biology, chemistry, geology and soil research.

Institutes train experts for practical work and research in all branches of industry, transport, construction, tele-communications, agriculture, economics, pedagogics, medicine, architecture, the theatre, cinema and the arts.

Specialised institutes cover the chief branches of industry, farming and culture. For example, there are institutes that train engineers for the oil industry, textile industry, steel smelting, non-ferrous metals, sericulture, cotton cultivation and irrigation, mechanisation of agriculture, the fishing industry; experts in foreign languages, library administration, and research, physical culture, etc.

Institutes are likewise subdivided into faculties, the number of which ranges from three to eight. The Leningrad Industrial Institute, for example, has the following faculties: metallurgy, mechanics, electrical mechanics, power and machine building, hydrotechnology, engineering physics, applied economics.

The larger Institutes have from 4,000 to 6,000 students. The course of study is from four to six years, depending on the speciality.

The curriculum and programme of each faculty is approved by the Ministry of Higher Education. Practical work figures prominently in the curricula. The fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism and one foreign language are taught in all higher educational establishments, irrespective of what speciality the student takes up.

Studies are subordinated to a strict schedule which provides for six to seven hours daily of classwork and lectures. Lectures predominate in the first two years of study. In senior years the accent is more on seminars, laboratory work, specialised lecture courses, and specialised class study.

Every year the student is required to submit a written thesis on any of the subjects studied. The themes of these papers are drawn up by the professors and approved by the corresponding chair.

Every university and institute has a Scientific Council, consisting of senior professors and *docents* (roughly approximating to lecturers or readers—Ed.). At the head of each faculty is a dean, appointed from the professorate and working in conjunction with the faculty Scientific Board.

Co-ordination of teaching and research work in each subject, or in a number of kindred subjects, is achieved through the chair for that subject (for example the chair for ancient history co-ordinates all work on that subject within the given university or institute).

The teaching staff is made up of professors, *docents*, instructors and assistants. Appointment to the post of professor or *docent* is by competition arranged among applicants with appropriate academic degrees. Professorships are conferred by the Higher Qualification Commission of the Ministry of Higher Education, and are open only to applicants holding a Doctor of Science degree.

The title of *docent* is conferred on scientific workers holding a Master's degree. Aspirants for the Masters' degree, the first scientific degree, must take a three-year post-graduate course, pass a special examination and submit a dissertation.

Applicants for the Doctor's degree must hold a Master's degree and are likewise required to submit a dissertation embodying extensive research on the chosen subject, scientific generalisation of some problem, new scientific findings or a new solution for a specific problem of science. Only a small number of higher educational institutions and scientific research bodies have the right to confer the Doctor's degree.

The universities and other schools of higher learning are open to persons of both sexes below the age of thirty-five. A complete secondary education is essential. Applicants must be graduates of the secondary, specialised secondary, pedagogical or medical schools, and must undergo entrance examinations in Russian and literature, one of the foreign languages (English, French or German), and, as a rule, in two subjects taught in the given institute or faculty.

For example, persons seeking entrance to the physics and mathematics faculty of the university or to any of the technical institutes are examined in mathematics and physics. Examinations cover the secondary school programme. Gold or silver medal graduates of secondary schools are exempt from examinations.

The university term begins throughout the country on September 1 and is divided into two half-terms, with a three- or four-week examination period at the conclusion of each. During the examination period the student is required to pass three or four major examinations and four or five tests.

The examinations and tests are conducted by the professors and *docents* who teach the given subject, and the student is given one of four marks: excellent, good, satisfactory, or poor. For tests he simply gets the mark "passed". Every student has an examination card which contains a record of his studies over the entire course.

Promotion from course to course is by examination and test. Graduation class students in addition to their annual examinations, are required to pass prescribed State examinations covering the entire university curriculum.

In the universities, besides State examinations, graduating students must submit a diploma thesis. In the technical institutes, the student presents a paper on his speciality which is considered by a State examining commission.

In addition to theoretical knowledge gained through lectures, seminars and laboratory work, practical work in the chosen field holds an important place in the general scheme of higher learning. Thus, students of geography take part in geographical expeditions; students of mining or geological institutes, or geological faculties of universities are sent for practical work in the pits, or with prospecting parties; students of agricultural institutes and academies do their practical work on State and collective farms.

Practically every higher educational establishment has its own scientific circles and societies. This form of undergraduate activity is an important complement to the knowledge acquired in the classroom and laboratory.

The scientific circles and societies are greatly instrumental in developing the qualities necessary for independent research; they give scope to the student's initiative and help to extend and broaden his general knowledge of the subject. The work of the circles and societies, which are open to all undergraduates, is guided by members of the teaching staff.

Soviet universities and institutes are not only seats of advanced learning, but important research centres.

The school of mathematicians trained by the University of Moscow enjoys world-wide renown. Moscow University is also noted for its contribution to the study of aero-dynamics, begun by the celebrated Soviet scientist, Professor N. Y. Zhukovsky, and continued by Academician S. A. Chaplygin and his pupils. Outstanding research has been accomplished by Academicians Zelinsky, Namyotkin and Nesmeyanov, all of the University of Moscow.

The University of Leningrad is known for its research in optics (Academician D. S. Rozhdestvensky and others), geography (Academicians A. A. Grigoryev and L. S. Berg), oriental studies (B. M. Alexeyev and I. Y. Krachkovsky), philology and research in Russian and other Slav languages (Academicians N. Y. Marr, I. I. Meshchaninov, S. P. Obnorsky, L. V. Shcherba, N. S. Derzhavin and others).

Important research in higher mathematics and geology has been carried out in the universities of Kiev, Kharkov and Kazan. The Molotov University is known for its research in biology. Unique studies of the Caucasus area, and notably of Georgia and Armenia, have won the young universities of these two Republics wide renown.

Among the technical institutes, mention should be made of

the Bauman Higher Technical School in Moscow, the Leningrad and Moscow Schools of Mining, the Leningrad Polytechnical Institute, and the Oil Institute. Outstanding work in agricultural research has been performed by Academician T. D. Lysenko, disciple and follower of the famous Michurin. Lysenko exposed the anti-scientific and reactionary "theories" of Weismann and Morgan. In the medical sciences, we can point to the work of the eminent surgeons, Academicians N. N. Burdenko and S. I. Spasso-Kukotsky, and to the work of Professor V. P. Filatov in the treatment of eye diseases.

In addition to its educational and research activities, the Soviet higher school disseminates scientific and technical knowledge among the population at large. Professors and instructors deliver lectures at factories, in Soviet army units and in the schools. Many of the higher educational establishments maintain lecture centres for the general public. Noted scientists take part in compiling textbooks for the secondary schools and contribute to popular science publications.

Educational work in the Soviet higher schools is combined with the ideological and political training of the students on the basis of the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Of major importance in this respect is the course on the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism, which is taught in every university and institute.

In addition, student organisations arrange periodical theoretical discussions of specific works of Lenin and Stalin, organise circles for the study of current politics, and lectures and reports on political subjects. Cultural activities are widespread, their purpose being to provide variated recreation for the student, sports and amateur art facilities, such as drama, music, choir and dancing circles, and classes in painting.

All students who excel in their studies receive a State stipend. This rule applies to all higher educational establishments. The amount of the stipend increases with every year of study. Many institutes have higher stipends in honour of outstanding statesmen or scientists. The most honoured of these is the Stalin stipend which is granted to students who have won distinction in the academic work.

Out-of-town students are provided with living quarters in student hostels built and maintained at the expense of the State.

In order to enable persons employed in industry or in offices to acquire a higher education without giving up their regular work, evening classes and correspondence courses have been opened in many of our universities and institutes. The evening classes are meant for local residents; their duration is six years.

For out-of-town students there are correspondence courses, but the students are required to appear at the university twice

a year for review lectures and laboratory work, followed by examinations. They receive full pay during these periods.

Graduates of the correspondence courses take the ordinary State examinations (or submit a diploma thesis) and enjoy exactly the same rights as graduates of the normal course. Upwards of 300,000 men and women have availed themselves of these facilities, thus bringing the total of university students in the U.S.S.R. to over a million.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

CULTURAL-EDUCATIONAL centres play an important part in the general system of public education and enlightenment. The existence of numerous clubs, libraries and museums makes it possible to bring culture to millions of men and women, and to disseminate knowledge among the working people of all nationalities.

The Soviet Government allocates very large sums for the foundation and upkeep of these cultural centres and does everything to encourage public activities along these lines. This constant aid and support by the State and public organisations has enabled the cultural centres to develop their work on what can truly be described as an immense scale.

The number of clubs and kindred institutions runs into tens of thousands. In fact, there is hardly any sizable industrial or other establishment without its own club and library. In Moscow alone, there are twenty-one Palaces of Culture and 152 clubs maintained by the trade unions. They range from comparatively modest clubs to huge Palaces of Culture, designed by the finest architects and imposingly furnished and decorated.

One of these is the Palace of Culture of the Moscow Stalin Automobile Plant which occupies a building specially built for it, and has a theatre seating 1,100, a concert hall, auditorium and a dance hall accommodating 700. This Palace of Culture is particularly famed for its Hall of Columns with a seating capacity of 1,200, its many study rooms, recreation rooms, etc. All in all, the Palace can accommodate over 5,000 people.

Noted, too, are the Leningrad Palaces of Culture. One of them, the Kirov Palace, has 175 rooms and halls, and its study and amateur art circles are attended by over 4,000 people.

Every club, no matter how small, has its own library and reading room. Lectures, discussions, concerts and theatrical performances are regular features of club activities.

But perhaps the most salient feature of club work are the numerous circles which cover a wide variety of study, amateur art, technology and also physical culture and sports.

The work of all our clubs is based on the activity of the membership. Every club is run by an elected board and is financed by the trade union and the factory or mill to which it is attached. Clubs have also been organised in the countryside.

The total number of clubs in the U.S.S.R. was over 100,000 in 1939. During the war the number contracted substantially, but growth was resumed, and at a very rapid pace, since the end of the war. By the end of the present Five-Year Plan the U.S.S.R. will have 284,900 clubs and libraries.

Kindred to the clubs are our Parks of Culture and Rest, a new type of cultural institution which has developed extensively since 1930

The Central Park of Culture and Rest in Moscow, named in honour of Maxim Gorky, occupies a large area—over 15,500 acres—on the picturesque bank of the Moskva River. Its imposing buildings include a children's theatre, cinema, several concert halls, a lecture auditorium, technical study centres, libraries and reading rooms and ample facilities for sports and athletics. The Gorky Park is visited by tens of thousands of people daily.

Similar parks, though on a smaller scale, have been opened in other parts of Moscow, in Leningrad and in many other towns, workers' settlements and even in the larger villages.

Public libraries and reading rooms will be found in every city and village. They are organised so as to cater for the needs of different types of readers and for different age-groups. The largest of these libraries are the State Lenin Library in Moscow, the Saltykov-Shchedrin Library in Leningrad, and the Korolenko Library in Kharkov.

National libraries have been founded in every Union Republic. In addition to these public libraries there are special scientific libraries open to all research workers, engineers, writers, students, etc.

In 1939 the U.S.S.R. had approximately 250,000 libraries of which 77,590 served the general public. A thing to be noted is the establishment of public libraries in the Union Republics of the eastern part of the U.S.S.R. For example, Uzbekistan, where before the Revolution the native population had no access to literature, now has approximately 2,000 public libraries, two-thirds of which are in rural localities.

No small share in the general scheme of education and enlightenment belongs to our museums.

The peoples of the U.S.S.R. revere the memory of their great leaders, scientists and writers. This reverence has found expression in the establishment of a number of memorial museums, the best known of which is the V. I. Lenin Museum in Moscow with branches in other towns. Three museums are devoted to the life and work of Leo Tolstoi; there is a Chaikovski Museum, a Chekhov Museum, etc. Among our art galleries mention should be made of the celebrated Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow and the Russian Museums in Leningrad.

Public lectures are organised by the Committees on Educational and Cultural Institutions, higher schools, research bodies and clubs, which in many cases have a staff of full-time lecturers. Prominent scientists and the country's best-known experts often give public lectures.

In 1947 the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. took the initiative in founding the All-Union Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge. To it are affiliated all the major scientific research and higher learning institutions of the country.

Its membership also includes academicians, professors, prominent writers, artists and composers who are elected on the recommendation of scientific or public bodies. The public lectures arranged by the Society in Moscow and other cities are extremely popular. We need only point out that in 1948 it organised 83,000 lectures which drew an audience of twelve million; in the first ten months of 1949 its 250,000 lectures were attended by twenty-nine million people.

Many lectures are arranged by our cultural-educational institutions; in the Russian Soviet Republic alone they were responsible for 830,000 lectures and talks in 1947.

THE SOVIET SCHOOL TEACHER

THE school teacher is an important and honoured figure in the Land of the Soviets. Upon him depends largely the content and quality of the education provided by our schools. He is regarded as a key factor in the entire system of public education, as one who fulfills an important function in the Socialist State: the function of bringing culture to the people and of training the young generation.

As early as 1925 Joseph Stalin wrote about the work of our teachers: "The phalanx of public-school teachers constitutes one of the most essential sections of the great army of working people of our country who are building a new life on the basis of Socialism."

The school teacher has a big part to play, and upon him devolves a great responsibility. He must possess a scientific world-outlook and high erudition. He must be well grounded in his profession, must understand and like children, who regard him as a model to be emulated.

Hundreds of thousands of Soviet teachers have, by their practical work in the schools, by their participation in public life, as well as by their staunch defence of the country during the grim years of the Patriotic War, demonstrated that they are worthy of the great trust reposed in them by the people, and that they are capable of discharging their duty to the country with honour and credit.

The general cultural advance in the U.S.S.R. has brought with it a substantial increase in the number of teachers and has greatly enhanced the standards they must meet.

In the school year 1914-15 the pedagogical staff of all the schools of pre-revolutionary Russia totalled 231,007 teachers and instructors. At present the number of teachers in the U.S.S.R. is approaching the 1,500,000 figure.

The training of this vast army of school teachers in a comparatively brief period of time entailed a colossal effort. A network of higher and secondary pedagogical schools had to be established, training courses opened, consultation centres and other auxiliary facilities provided.

Teachers for the elementary school are trained in our pedagogical schools where the course of study is four years. Admittance is to all persons with a finished seven-year education. In addition to a complete secondary education these schools give the prospective teacher a thorough grounding in psychology, pedagogics, the history of pedagogics, and methods of instruction in each of the subjects taught in the elementary school.

A special point is made of affording the students ample opportunity for practical work in the schools. Teachers for grades five, six and seven of the seven-year and secondary schools are trained in two-year teachers' training colleges, which admit applicants with a finished secondary education.

Lastly teachers for the eighth, ninth and tenth grades of the secondary school are trained in our higher pedagogical institutes and in the universities. The pedagogical institutes have the following faculties: language and literature, history, geography, physics and mathematics, natural science, foreign languages.

Some of the institutes also have special faculties of pedagogics which train instructors in pedagogics and psychology and experts in the methods of pre-school education.

The U.S.S.R. ranks first in the world in the number of higher pedagogical institutes. It has 138 pedagogical institutes and 236 teachers' training colleges.

The refresher courses for teachers, which have been organised in many regional centres, keep the school-teacher in touch with the latest developments in scientific research. Opportunities to augment training and knowledge are offered also by the evening and extension departments of the pedagogical and teachers' institutes.

Courses have also been opened for teachers of non-Russian schools, especially for the nationalities which prior to the Revolution did not have their own alphabets.

The peoples and Government of the Soviet Union have a high regard for the school-teacher and for his services to the community. Over 100,000 teachers have been decorated with Government orders and medals. A large number of school-teachers have been elected to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics, and to regional, city, district and rural Soviets of Working People's Deputies. Significantly enough, twenty-seven teachers were delegates to the Extraordinary Eighth Congress of Soviets which adopted the great Constitution of the U.S.S.R.

The Soviet Government has instituted a number of privileges for school-teachers. There is a special title of Merited School-Teacher. Soviet school-teachers receive the same remuneration

as engineers and technicians in industry. There is also a system of service bonuses payable for every five years' work in the schools, and teachers in remote districts receive an additional bonus. Pensions are payable after twenty-five years' service.

Both in the Crimea and in the Caucasus, as well as in other parts of the country, there are rest homes and sanatoria for members of the teaching profession, and a very large number of teachers can use these facilities free of charge, or at reduced prices. Every large city has its teachers' club with library and reading room, concert and theatre halls, study rooms, etc.

Long and devoted service to education is regarded in the Soviet Union as an outstanding feat of labour, as an important contribution to the common weal. By special legislative Act the Government has instituted a system of decorating teachers for distinguished service.

The Soviet school with its vast army of teachers occupies a highly important and responsible sector of Socialist construction. The Soviet people are engaged in the building of Communist Society. The army of Soviet teachers trains and educates the growing generation, preparing it to take its place in the life and struggle of the people, arming it with sound knowledge of the fundamentals of science, rearing it in the spirit of Soviet patriotism. Soviet teachers train cultured, educated citizens of Socialist society, active fighters for Communism.