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Enormous wealth is a mighty prop to self-esteem. The fabulously rich live, as it were, surrounded by a wall holding the world at arm's length, shutting out reality, and buying them exemption from most experiences through which life normally teaches men the truth about themselves: They need not compete for the economic and social prizes of life, or suffer the unpleasant consequences of folly and failure, or hear the disinterested criticism of a friend. Thus protected against the harsh facts of life, it is easy to imagine oneself superior, not just in wealth but in other respects as well. This is a pleasant illusion, but it may have consequences not even the richest can afford. Under its spell one is likely to sink into the stagnation of complacency, to consider self-improvement unnecessary, to live in blissful ignorance of what goes on outside one's own charmed life. "From shirtsleeves to shirtsleeves in three generations" shrewdly sums it up.

History tells us this fate is not restricted to individuals. Indeed, few things are as certain in life as the fact that no wall will forever shut out the world and allow one to live happily with one's illusions. Others will overtake the man, the class, the nation lost in narcissist admiration of an image that is not a true reflection of self. Our own wealth deludes us in this fashion.

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Foolishly equating a high material standard of living with general excellence and political supremacy, we misread our true position in the world and thereby run the risk of being by-passed by nations more alert to reality.

Let us ask ourselves how much of the credit for our affluence we can honestly ascribe to superior national qualities, how much to good fortune? I submit we are altogether too inclined to forget that the principal source of our material well-being is the land we own - its size, its resources and favorable climate, its advantageous geographic position. Nor are we realistic as to how we acquired this valuable land - that we won it with less effort than territorial conquest normally requires. Look at a globe and compare the tiny sliver of Alsace-Lorraine with the expanse of this country. Consider how much French and German blood has been shed in the see-saw struggle over this small area and how little - comparatively speaking - was shed in our wars with the Indians, the British, the Mexicans from whom we wrested control of our broad acres. Where else was it possible to buy huge chunks of territory for a few million dollars? One can compare America's conquest only with the acquisition of overseas empires by European nations. Of all these ours was the biggest prize; moreover we were able to remove America's former stone-age owners and thus hold on to the land in perpetuity.

Until well into the 19th century, every American was potential owner of land the size of a European duchy; even today each of us is relatively land rich. Naturally, the same abilities, the same amount of labor, earn us a better living than would be possible in the old countries with their stable frontiers and unfavorable ratio of land to population. Else why did millions uproot themselves and come here? This was more obvious in our early days when one could see the riches lying about, ready to be gathered. The settlers well

understood it was these riches rather than unusual ability that gave a man a chance to become wealthy, whereas at home his skill would have earned him a pittance. Today we take the natural wealth of our country for granted. We tend to discount this important fact: Modern mass production technology yields optimum benefits when it operates in an area of continental size, where the soil is fertile and the earth replete with raw materials.

Europe pioneered the new science - as she had pioneered the techniques of the Industrial Revolution - but we were the first to utilize science on a scale appropriate to its potentials. Our ingenuity in transferring work from men to machines and in widely distributing the resultant benefits of wealth and leisure have been truly remarkable, but no more so than have been our natural advantages. Not only did we possess within our borders most of the raw materials needed to feed our machines and a large enough domestic market to absorb their output, but our geographic position allowed us to remain aloof from the wars and revolutions that tore Europe apart. We were, therefore, able to concentrate our efforts on building the new wealth-creating technology. The advent of the Age of Science coincided with the destruction of Europe's hegemony in World War I. While she lost political supremacy and much of her accumulated wealth, our productive capacity grew by leaps and bounds and our standard of living rose beyond the dreams of avarice.

The same combination of talent and luck also made us the greatest military power. During World War II we produced more weapons than the rest of the combatants combined. At war's end we stood at the pinnacle of wealth and power; it is not surprising we also reached a pinnacle of self-esteem. Few of us doubted our favored position proved conclusively that our institutions, our way of life, indeed our people were superior to those of the poor, quarrelsome, inefficient

countries outside our borders. The rest of the world, while not sharing our belief in the superiority of all things American, readily admitted our technical supremacy and envied our comfortable life.

But today our position is no longer so firmly established. Europe, slowly moving towards economic unity, has built a mass production technology that begins to rival our own; indeed we are having trouble competing in world markets, and recently we have suffered an imbalance of international payments and a drain on our gold reserve. The totalitarian bloc has already destroyed the total weapons superiority that was ours but a few years ago and now threatens to outdo us in using science for the creation of wealth. Their sputniks and moonshots shook belief in American scientific and technological superiority; their success in creating a mass education system of such high scholastic quality that it is producing many more professionals than our own, has brought widespread questioning of our alleged educational supremacy. Realization that geographic distance is rendered meaningless by the very science that made us wealthy and powerful, and that we are now in actual danger of physical destruction by war, makes us wonder whether we ought not call a halt to our heedless pursuit of a good time and an easy life. At the same time, thinking Americans are suddenly becoming aware that we are now losing the major advantage we possessed throughout our history - our tremendously larger per capita wealth in land and natural resources. At current population growth rates we shall own no more land per capita a century hence than does Europe today, and Europe is one of the most crowded areas in the world. Furthermore, at present raw materials consumption rates, the land will then be greatly diminished in value.

Most of us behave as if our natural wealth were inexhaustible, at least during our lifetime; nobody worries about scarcities that will bedevil future generations. Like persons of great wealth who expect to buy exemption from the

consequences of follies and failures, we cling to the erroneous belief our difficulties can be remedied by pouring out money. We spare ourselves the trouble of finding out where we went astray and how we can do better in future; instead, we simply dig more wealth out of the ground. We face up neither to the limits of our resources nor to the fact that money isn't always the answer to our predicaments. For instance, money will not buy exemption from the consequences of blunders we commit in our relations with other countries; it will not undo the waste of talent that goes on in swollen bureaucracies, including our vast system of public education; it does not balance out spiritual, moral or intellectual inadequacies in our way of life. In the words of Robert Osborn "our blunders must bring us finally to the chilling confrontation with our true competitive position against other cultures."

We are now confronted with clear-cut evidence that in the all-important field of education our true competitive position against certain other advanced nations is unsatisfactory. The wall behind which we have been nursing the illusion that "our schools are the best in the world" is being rudely pulled down and we must face up to the truth, remedy our educational errors and do a great deal better by our children. Evidence of the inadequacy of our schools has long been available to all who cared to look, but it took Russian space and missile successes to dramatize for the general public what leaders in government, industry and the universities had known for years but could not make clear to the people and the educators. And this is, that not even so rich a people as we can afford underpaid and under-educated teachers, absence of academic standards, and a philosophy of fun and games at school; not when we are being challenged by an adversary whose system of public education achieves high scholastic levels for large numbers of its children; especially not when he is more than equal in such other facets of political power as size, population and resources.

The totalitarian threat is by no means the only reason why we must massively upgrade education. The time is long past when Americans did not really need as much education as, for instance, Europeans, simply because our natural wealth made up for educational deficiencies. But now that our natural advantages are shrinking, we must demand more of ourselves. At the levels of technology we have reached, this demand centers on intellectual competence, hence on education.

Take the matter of transforming natural resources into products for human use. Americans did not have to be highly educated to trap fur animals, cut virgin timber or mine precious metals; this easy way of making a living is gone forever; farmers did not need to know scientific agriculture as long as the soil could be mined and left exhausted and there was ample land further west, but this easy way of farming is also gone forever. And so on down the line. Each time we discover that a particular natural resource is not inexhaustible, we have to learn how to conserve and nurture where formerly we exploited. Some progress has been made in managing renewable resources, albeit against violent opposition by powerful interests preferring raw exploitation with quick profits. But we still remain exploitive in our use of the non-renewable raw materials essential to mass production technology.

We seem incapable of grasping the fact that the earth is finite and holds but a fixed amount of minerals and fuels. We use these up faster than is necessary or prudent because we are wholly committed to an ever rising production of consumer goods with built-in obsolescence for the sake of rapid turnover. No country rivals us in speeding a ton of raw material from mine to factory to consumer to scrap heap. Few Americans have even noticed that some ten years ago we ceased to be a major exporter of minerals and fuels, and that we depend

increasingly on imports of vitally needed raw materials. For these we must pay with exports. Thus for the first time in our history foreign trade has become crucial to our economy.

Yet we have little control over the world market where we must compete with Europe and the totalitarian bloc whose technologies no longer are greatly inferior to our own. We hear almost daily that one or another American product has been priced out of the world market - a clear sign that it is becoming more and more difficult for us to maintain salary, wage and profit levels far above those of other advanced industrial nations. As others reach our technological efficiency and we lose superiority in natural wealth, only by greater effort can we earn these higher levels. Alternatively they could be sustained by government subsidy through which the American people would support the industrial sector as we already support the farming sector.

Although our way of living depends on a technology based on science at rarefied levels our attitude towards non-renewable resources remains that of a pre-scientifically thinking people. For this we must blame the schools where science is shamefully neglected. It would be difficult to find more unsuitable schooling than the current life-adjustment training. The future of all industrial nations depends ultimately on their ability to discover man-made resources to take the place of natural ones, in the meantime nursing their own resources carefully and keeping channels of supply from foreign sources open and secure. The best - indeed the only - major remaining large store-house is Africa with its untapped natural wealth. It may sound heretical, but Africa is more important to us than Latin America. Yet Russia is taking the lead in preparing for eventual control of African raw materials.

We are equally remiss in promoting development of new man-made resources. Our system of education does not produce enough first-rate scientists and engineers, and our organizational procedures do not make best use of those we have. The basic reason is our unenlightened attitude towards people whose talents lie in the higher areas of pure intelligence.

It makes no sense at our level of civilization to indulge in hostility towards what we scornfully call intellectual "elites." We depend on these elites to push us forward technologically, to devise ways to overcome scarcities that we ourselves have brought about by unwise exploitation of finite resources. We need them to manage our complex society and to advance us culturally. Strangely enough, Russia, despite her doctrine of the classless society, recognizes better than we how important are men of high intellect to a modern state. Her system of education is better adapted than ours to the needs of talented youth aspiring to professional careers. In the name of "democracy" and "equality", our schools neglect the education of children with superior minds and thus saddle us with a chronic shortage of professionals.

It may be difficult for us to shift to an attitude of respect for the "thinking", the "creative" man but we must do so if we wish to remain in the forefront of civilization. The time is past when we could justify our excessive admiration for the so-called "practical" man - a man more often than not simply good at making lots of money by exploiting our natural wealth. Today the most valuable human talent is not manual skill, or commercial shrewdness or even pure managerial proficiency; it is the educated mind. Highly developed intellect is most valuable because it contributes most to general well-being. To develop the latent mental capacities of young people is surely the principal task of a good educational system. Unfortunately most of our schools perform this task not at all or badly.

I am often accused of wanting us to educate only the "elite", yet it is not I who claims that no more than 20% of high school students are capable of a college-preparatory course and the rest ought to be shunted into vocational training! I argue that our less able children need more basic education; they must be more skillfully instructed and more strongly motivated to make the special effort that alone can bridge the gap dividing them from talented youth. Handing out unearned degrees is a cruel deception.

Every democracy must, of course, have mass education but it must be education. We depend on our schools to impart to every normal boy or girl enough basic knowledge to understand the world they live in; to develop in them enough intellectual skill so they can judge public issues intelligently, independently and wisely. Mass education of high quality is absolutely essential in a democracy that now has 180 million citizens and is growing so rapidly it will have almost one hundred times more people in the year 2000 than at its birth in 1789. Each member of the House of Representatives will then represent close to one million people; to visualize what this means remember that with the same representation our first Congress would have had a total of only four members in the House.

To illustrate the complexity of the issues American voters must decide, take the problem of how we can hold on to the essence of democracy while relinquishing democratic customs that are no longer feasible; the voter needs a good deal of what might be called "educated intelligence" to handle this wisely. Despite much talk of "teaching democracy" our schools do not provide mass education that gives understanding of how our government actually functions. Few voters are fully aware of the heavy work load carried by conscientious public officials; otherwise there would not be so much unjustifiable interference with public business. Too few comprehend the enormity of the task of running so populous a country under a democratic system.

The Founding Fathers, who were somewhat concerned lest at three million we were too large to manage a successful democracy, would have despaired had they foreseen that some 250 years after its establishment the population of this nation might approach one billion! Even with today's 180 million, the sheer weight of this mass of people tends to paralyze government. It is essential that voters be able to strike a wise and fair balance between concern for the individual and the imperative of managing our complex society efficiently. Some pleasant customs of an earlier America ought to be relinquished. I am thinking in particular of the easy accessibility of high government officials to the ordinary American, the privilege of writing to and visiting the men he puts into office, of asking their help for personal problems. In the past this privilege strengthened American democracy; today it hampers; tomorrow it could render government so inefficient that democracy itself would be in peril. We must, of course, keep the channels open through which help can be solicited for unusual distress or serious miscarriage of justice, but do we not fall short of responsible citizenship when we flood public officials with petty requests for special favors? It has become quite the thing for American school children to ask officials to write school essays for them!

Because of the totalitarian threat, the public consequences of inadequate schooling are at the moment highlighted. Apologists for our schools profess great indignation at the emphasis many critics put upon the nation's need for better education of our children. No thinking American is unaware that in our philosophy education must serve the needs of the individual. Nobody denies that. But we are easily confused here. We do not educate our children to serve the state, but would it not be suicidal if we disregarded the educational needs of society? In a democracy the nation's need is part of the individual's need for none of us will retain our individual freedom unless our country remains strong and free.

Pari passu, I should like to point out that educationally speaking we are one nation; a child's educational needs are the same whether he goes to school in a well-to-do suburb or a city slum, in a backwoods village or an industrial center. We are a nomadic people, constantly on the move across this country - and the world; rising or falling in the social scale. Few children remain in the community or social group into which they were born. Schools must give them the basic education they will need to live successfully wherever they may settle. It is horse and buggy thinking, wholly out of touch with reality, to maintain that the schools should meet specific local needs; that these needs differ; that we therefore cannot tolerate any central direction in matters of scholastic standards. Even the establishment of a permissive national standard for diplomas, curricula, teacher qualifications, which would merely give local communities a yardstick to measure the performance of their schools raises violent opposition among the schoolmen.

We are the only advanced nation where the absence of standards is considered a necessary element of "democratic" education. We are actually proud of our scholastic anarchy though it gives mediocrity free rein; we labor under the delusion this is the price we must pay for democracy; and so we cheerfully expose our children to extreme geographical inequalities in education. We tolerate dishonest labeling of diplomas and degrees; we open wide the door to interference with the teaching of science or literature by uneducated and bigoted individuals in backward communities, and to dilution of curricula with non-academic courses forced on the schools by self-seeking pressure groups. Worst of all, by rejecting national standards we deprive ourselves of the strongest instrument for improving education. I know of no country that has successfully carried through far-reaching educational reforms without making use of fixed scholastic standards to raise school performance.

Let us consider this "local needs" argument realistically. We must be clear in our minds what we mean when we talk about "control" of education. A community must first know what types of schools it needs and how many of each kind it can support. Like the United States most democracies decide this by majority vote on the local level. But the content of education is nearly everywhere else left to the judgment of trusted men of high scholarship and wide experience. By content I mean detailed direction of such complex technical matters as teacher qualifications, programming of sequential curricula, setting of achievement levels for different kinds of schools, fixing the conditions that must be met before a diploma has been earned, etc. As a result, all of Europe, despite political diversity, maintains surprisingly similar educational standards; diplomas granted at the end of academic secondary schooling admit students both to national and foreign universities without further examination.

Our high school diploma has limited value in selecting students for admission to American colleges, and no value for foreign educational institutions. In education, as in monetary matters, a piece of paper not backed by solid gold is valueless. Oddly enough, while we still oppose the idea of a national scholastic standard as representing centralized control, we have been driven by necessity to accept a privately determined national test - the College Boards. Few of our college-bound youth take this test, thereby obtaining valid proof of their academic achievement. Abroad, certificates of achievement exist for various scholastic levels and so every youngster can earn himself a diploma attesting to his achievements. Schools are held to their required levels by the fact that any slippage would instantly show up in failure of their students to obtain these certificates - a powerful protection of parent and child against mediocre schoolmasters.

Every educational system reflects the intelligence and scholarship of the men who lead it. Other democracies take great care to select highly qualified leaders; we are hostile to leadership by our best minds. We make the average, the median, the mediocre our norm; we allow control of the content of education to be exercised by men whose native endowment and education are on the whole rather modest. For some four decades, moreover, control has been exercised by people who do not accept the traditional concept of education that prevails in all other countries tracing their intellectual history to Greece and Rome.

In other western nations the public recognizes that education has the dual purpose of transmitting knowledge to oncoming generations so they can build thereon and move civilization forward, and of developing the child's intellectual capacities so that he will become an adult able to reason independently and logically. These are the two universal characteristics of genuine education.

Uneducated people have trouble recognizing that in matters of the intellect the best is needed by everyone - there cannot be differing "local needs." No matter where they practice, surgeons should ideally have the same knowledge, hence the same education. No one would accept the claim of a mediocre medical school that it merely serves "local needs." Take another example, the police. In the United States the police are under local control, yet this does not prevent them from learning advanced procedures from a national agency - the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

As great an error as the "local needs" argument is the notion that education must serve distinctive "national needs"; that what is done in the schools of one sovereign nation can be of no interest to those of another. For years we have deprecated comparisons of our schools with those of Europe on the convenient assumption that we have a democratic mass education system, they have a "class" system. Basically, rejection of all comparison is rooted in our sense of

superiority. We have not had this sense of superiority for long. During the 19th century we profited greatly from Europe's educational experiences and acknowledged she was far ahead of us. But since our post-World War I rise to power we have been disinclined to admire anything European and we have acquired a home-grown philosophy which purports to have discovered a new "science" of education allegedly far superior to anything previously known anywhere.

A favorite gambit of defenders of the status quo is to accuse critics of our schools of trying to foist Russian or European education on our children. They cannot understand that a nation's stature is dependent largely on its level of education. Foreign school achievements supply us with a reverse Plimsoll line below which we must not sink; what they have achieved can give us valuable ideas on how to improve our own education.

The argument against educational comparison runs somewhat like this: "Nothing is to be learned from educational successes abroad, for look how much richer, more democratic, agreeable, decent and in every respect superior we are. What concern is it of ours how Russia educates her children since they must all become obedient subjects of her totalitarian rulers. Why should we bother to examine France's high scholastic achievements, we surely don't want her kind of political mess. Or Germany's, for we don't want a Hitler. Or England's, for we don't want her 'class' education."

A moment's thought will show that formal schooling is but one of the many manifestations of the national spirit which together make up a nation's way of life. Education belongs to the non-material part of this way of life, together with literature, art, religion, morals, aesthetics, public taste, science, etc. All these are affected by the physical setting - the land and the people - and by the country's technological levels, its social concepts and its political

institutions. Nevertheless, the non-material facets of national culture must be judged on their merits. No sensible American, for instance, would reject Russian ballet and deny himself the pleasure of watching Ulanova because the Russian political system is abhorrent to us. The United States did not hesitate to utilize the services of numerous European nuclear scientists to build the A-bomb even though they received their education in what we deprecatingly call Europe's "class" system of education. Nor did we have scruples about using inventions made by nations we dislike - we are quite happy to profit from Nazi science in jet and rocket development. When it comes to procedures that prove successful in educating children, we may well find it just as advisable to learn from others. Education is ethically neutral; it is good in itself though it can be used for evil purposes as can any human accomplishment.

The slogan "only the United States educates all children" is perhaps the most detrimental illusion fostered by educational standpatters. It discourages us from comparing our schools with those of other countries and so from discovering how much better American education ought to be. Endlessly proclaimed by official spokesmen for education, this slogan has attained a spurious validity and is often repeated by well-meaning people too lazy to check its correctness. Let us examine it here.

According to the U. S. Statistical Abstract the retention rate of fifth graders through the twelfth grade rose steadily in the last fifty years. It stood at 40% before World War II and reached 58% in 1957 (the last figure given in the Current Abstract). Retention through the first year of college had stabilized at 12% before 1940 and rose to 29% in 1957. Somewhat less than 20% complete college and about 5% undertake graduate studies. These figures show that a great many more Americans between ages 16-22 are in school or college

than anywhere else. So far so good. Does this mean that more Americans receive a longer period of formal schooling than anybody else?

Here we come to a question of values. If going to school and college is regarded as a privilege paid for by the taxpayer which allows young people to enjoy deferment from having to earn a living and to spend this time in pleasant and mildly instructive surroundings, then we do indeed educate - not all - but somewhat more than half our children to age 18, 20% to age 22. These statistics have quite a different meaning if we think of a school year, not as merely a year of pleasant companionship and freedom from work, not as a fixed possession guaranteed by the taxpayer, but as a span of time during which one is privileged to acquire knowledge under expert instruction. The length of time of formal schooling then becomes not the school year but the time spent in class. Here lies the root of the whole illusion. We forgot to interpolate into our attendance statistics the difference in number of hours spent at school during one American school year as compared to one average European school year; the American year is but 68% of the European year. Our school year has 180 days, the Continental European averages 240 days, and each European school-day has 10% more time devoted to instruction. Elementary arithmetic shows that our numerical advantage shrinks drastically when we compare time spent in class, instead of years spent in school. Twelve American school years contain no more class time than eight and one-fifth European school years.

This is a mechanical and over-simplified method of comparison. I use it merely to show up the favorite numbers game used by apologists for the educational status quo. Europe also outdoes us in other highly important factors determining the value of a class period as: teacher qualification, especially subject matter mastery; carefully planned curricula; a more serious application to studies.

Abroad school is for study. There are none of our constant interruptions with class plays, saving stamp programs, visiting the local firemen, cheering the football team, etc. There is also a great deal more homework. Yet, even if we disregard these other factors and merely stick to time spent in class, we find that our whole basis of comparison falls to the ground - as when we equate the American high school with the European secondary school, our college with the European university.

We know that both here and abroad about the same percentage of young people study at a university, preparing for a "learned" profession. Only Russia has far greater numbers preparing for professional careers. I think, if we made a careful study comparing - not years - but class time plus actual scholastic achievements, we should find no very substantial numerical superiority here even below graduate studies; furthermore, Europe is rapidly expanding educational opportunities for higher education. In many countries abroad there are now fewer financial barriers to higher studies than there are here where the cost of college is mounting rapidly.

In time every American parent will doubtless make his own calculation and reach the disillusioning conclusion that we do not really give a higher education to as many of our children as we have been led to believe. Moreover, if he goes into the subject more deeply, he will discover that abroad almost 100% of all normal children are in school for a minimum of 8 years compulsory education. Here only 62% make it to the twelfth grade - that is, as I have shown, to what corresponds to the eighth European school year. And let us not forget that on the Continent school fees were always low - usually adjusted to family income - and that they have been widely abolished up to age 18, and in some countries through university. It is true we pioneered the ideal of free education, but Europe is fast outstripping us in putting this ideal into practice.

Education is a matter so basic to the quality of national life that by steering it in the right direction we can change America's future and make it secure. It is so basic to the quality of an individual's life that when we improve our schools we greatly enlarge every young person's chances for a better personal life. Given its crucial importance we ought to discuss school reform in a spirit of sober rationality and factuality. The sole object of the current educational debate ought to be clarification of the issue and attainment of consensus on how to make our schools good enough for our children and second to none. Unfortunately, the men who run our schools refuse to admit the need for drastic reform; a little patching up here or there, yes, genuine reform, no; more money for schools, yes, but no substantial raising of educational standards. Understandably, these people, by conviction and livelihood identified with educational theories and practices now under fire, find it difficult to admit error and join in the struggle for better schools. To awaken from illusions of superiority is always painful; none of us have found it easy to face up to the inadequacies of an educational system we had been told was the best in the world; we have all been deeply shocked.

The "professional" educators are not so much shocked by the unsatisfactory state of our schools as by the fact that we talk about it in public. They look upon the current educational debate as a wholly unwarranted intrusion by unqualified laymen into matters reserved for the "professionals". The serious critic of American education is to them a wicked person of all-encompassing ignorance in educational matters; he is motivated by hatred of public education; he threatens their status, perhaps even their livelihood, and so must be defeated at all costs, if necessary by misquoting him, misrepresenting his case, vilifying him personally.

The tragedy is that this personalizing of what is a serious issue of transcendent importance to the nation and to our children turns the debate into an Alice-in-Wonderland kind of wrangle where illusion masquerades as truth; logic is submerged in irrelevancies; and the curious proposition is advanced that facts are of relative validity, i.e. dependent for their authenticity not on having been correctly stated but on having been voiced by the "right" person. No matter how carefully a critic of American education may select his facts, the professional defenders of our schools will reject them out of hand because, being the "wrong" man, he cannot according to their reasoning be stating the truth. Indeed, to these apologists his facts are mere opinions - opinions moreover tainted by malice and ignorance. Defenders of the status quo counter the truth the critic discloses with slogans based on illusions. No wonder we make such agonizingly slow progress in raising scholastic performance.

I believe it has now become an essential civic duty for every intelligent and educated person, for every person with deep love of his country and her children, to participate in the public debate on education. We must patiently marshal the facts that will show education can be improved; that better schools actually exist elsewhere; that there is no valid reason why the United States cannot have the best school system in the world. Unless those of us who are capable of studying the problem speak out, the American people will continue to feed on illusions that paralyze their will to take resolute and timely action. Once the need is fully understood by the American people I am confident they will compel reform and make certain it is carried out.