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SPECIAL TRAINING FOR GIFTED URGED

Admiral Rickover Proposes 25 Free Schools to Create a Brainpower Elite

By GENE CURRIVAN
Special to The New York Times

EAST ORANGE, N. J., Nov. 20—Rear Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, chief of the naval reactors branch of the Atomic Energy Commission, today accused the American school system of neglecting its talented youth.

The man who was instrumental in building the first atomic submarines when he headed the Nautilus and Sea Wolf projects suggested radical changes in engineering and scientific education.

He proposed that industry and

labor along with educational foundations set up a series of twenty-five free secondary academic schools. He said these would educate talented youths now being miseducated by lock-step methods in United States schools.

Admiral Rickover spoke to more than 300 educators, industrialists and government officials at the seventh Thomas Alva Edison Foundation Institute here. "To put it bluntly," he said, "our schools do not perform their primary purpose, which is to train the nation's brain power to the highest potential."

"We shall not do justice to our talented youth," he continued, "until we seek them out at an early age, no later than 10 or 11, and educate them separately from the rest of the children. This should be done preferably in separate schools or if this is not possible in separate classes."

By "talented" Admiral Rickover said he meant the top 15 to 20 per cent of the children. The "brilliant" or the top 2 per cent are the only ones receiving spe-

cial attention in current programs, he noted.

The admiral's talent schools would be on a par with the best academic high schools. The only requirement for entrance would be the ability to pass an examination designed to weed out the unfit.

"The schools," he said, "would be staffed by teachers, truly capable of teaching talented children; teachers whose qualifications place less emphasis on training in teaching methods and more on graduate study in their fields."

In defense of his proposed school Admiral Rickover said, "It would indeed be undemocratic to propose a cleavage along class lines but not one along lines of natural ability."

He held that to deny this kind of education to the minority who could benefit from it was unfair and undemocratic "as well as a waste of our most valuable national asset."

Dr. Carroll V. Newsom, president of New York University, also thought some changes should be made. He said there

was too much formal instruction in the junior and senior high schools where about half of the mathematics curriculum has little or no value for the students.

"We try to teach too much anyway," he said.

Dr. Herbert Scoville Jr., assistant director of the Central Intelligence Agency, who compared United States secondary education with that of the Soviet Union, said the United States apparently had "missed the boat." He noted that Russia's broad manpower base was supplied by the secondary schools, where the emphasis was on science and all students received a comprehensive outline regardless of their individual objectives.

He observed that Soviet teachers had social prestige and received high salaries. They concentrate on the subjects they teach rather than on the methodology of teaching. And every five years they have to submit to competitive examinations to keep them alert, he concluded.