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Education in China

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Foreword

Education is an indispensable ingredient in a programme of economic development. Industry requires a literate labour force and so does the organisation of co-operative agriculture. The introduction of modern technology, the health service and administration at every level, all require a high level of education.

To meet this need, the new government in China, after 1949, at first had to make do with what there was. There were two strands in the existing educational system: the ossified tradition of classical learning and Western knowledge disseminated by teachers who tried to make their pupils despise everything Chinese. Neither was appropriate to New China, but any teachers were better than none.

There was also the tradition of Yenan and other old liberated areas, but this had functioned in a much simpler framework than that of a modern economy and, in any case, the seasoned cadres had many more tasks to take on besides teaching school.

The old teachers could not help carrying forward the ancient tradition that a scholar (that is, someone who can read and write) is a superior being who needs and deserves to live on a higher plane than the mass of mankind. The only method of teaching was formal and authoritarian. Help from the USSR in technical education was valuable, but, often, the attitude of Russian teachers was not much of an improvement on that of the old missionaries.

Lui Shao-chi and his followers approved and advocated a policy of developing a privileged elite. Since there was a great need to man up all the professions, the quickest way was to limit education to those who were best prepared to profit by it. All the great industrial countries have developed by this means. Why should China take a different path?

During the bad years that followed the Great Leap, the Lui line was in the ascendency. The Cultural Revolution was a great heave to get back on to the course of Mao's conception of socialism. The reform of education was a major element in it.

The reports here presented reflect a time of transition when education is groping for a way to escape from the old formalism without losing what was valuable in the intellectual tradition that it preserved.

There is a great deal to be learned from what is going on in China that should be of interest to all who care about education, particularly in the attitude of teachers to their pupils and to the purpose of what they are teaching.

The most important part of education in China is outside the schools. The Thought of Mao Tse-tung is not only moral and political but also an appeal to apply the scientific method in daily life — to respect facts, to set up experiments and draw conclusions from them, to learn from mistakes. When peasants say:

by applying the Thought of Mao we can grow bigger cabbages, or workers, by that means we can build a heavier press, they are saying something which is perfectly true. The diffusion of a scientific attitude of mind, with the thirst for knowledge that it brings, throughout the whole population, reinforces the defence against the re-emergence of a class of intellectuals.

Cambridge, November, 1973 **Joan Robinson**

Preface

Enquiries about education in China are persistent and innumerable. This booklet has been produced in response to the demand for information, and as the result of a visit to China organised by the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding (SACU) in the spring of 1972. Peter Mauger, author of the introductory and concluding sections, is Head of the Education Department of Coventry College of Education. He and three other contributors, Valerie Marett, (Principal Lecturer, Leicester College of Education), Sylvia Mauger and Willie Edmunds (teachers in London schools), were members of the visiting group. The remaining two contributors, Roland Berger and Patrick Daly, also have recent first-hand experience of China.

We hope this brief account gives some picture of the development, direction and extent of education in China, and in particular of the relationship between education and society. Clearly it is far from complete. We should welcome comments and suggestions for removing imperfections, and for filling in the many gaps, so that the way can be prepared for a more detailed work on this important subject.

Chinese Education — Imperial past to socialist present

Peter Mauger

It took us three years (1949-52) to rebuild the economic basis of education. Everything from transport to schools was broken down. The nation was bankrupt. Money was useless: we were reduced to a barter system. All schools were closed. Our task was to put teachers back to work in both public and private — mostly missionary — schools. We did this by appeals to patriotism and promising regular pay — mostly in rice — and full co-operation, without much change in the system.1
(Tsui Chung-Yuan, Vice Minister of Education, in an interview with Edgar Snow, 26 August 1960.)

The traditional Chinese educational system before 1949 had been an uncomfortable amalgam of the age-old Chinese classical education with some Western modifications, in an attempt to bring China into the twentieth century. It was based on a system originally aimed at producing a small corps of officials to administer the Chinese Imperial government.

This civil service had been the most sophisticated organ of government in the world for almost two thousand years. The officials were chosen by means of a series of competitive examinations, based largely on the Confucian classics. ← Though theoretically open to almost everyone, in practice the long years of study necessary for success placed official careers out of reach of all but the sons of the gentry. It was an élitist system, designed to prevent change and to consolidate the existing social order. Academic and unreal, it was isolated from the lives of the peasants. Success in the examinations conferred extra-ordinary privileges and power, and education was consequently held in veneration to a degree unparalleled elsewhere in the world.

Fall of the Manchus

The successful aggression of the European powers against China in the 19th century and the subsequent exploitation of the country weakened the central imperial power, and the defeat of China by Japan in 1895 hastened the process of decay. In 1900 a popular revolt against foreign invasion led to a revolution against the imperial government; in 1911 the Manchu dynasty was swept away ✓ and a Republic proclaimed.

Western ideas had spread, especially in the coastal areas, through the influence of foreign businessmen, missionary schools and Chinese returning home after being educated abroad. A new generation of scholar-intellectuals attacked Confucianism and attempted to adopt Western ideas in literary, governmental and educational fields. Both Dewey and Bertrand Russell visited China during the IMP early years of the Republic, and attempts were made to make schooling available to wider sections of the population and to modernise the educational system.

But under Chiang Kai-shek the policy of the Kuomintang became increasingly reactionary and oppressive, and the reforms were still-born. There followed the long period of war waged by Chiang Kai-shek against the Communists.

In 1937, the year of the beginning of full-scale Japanese invasion, perhaps 15 per cent of the country's children received primary education, and a much smaller proportion attended middle schools. Still fewer qualified for higher education institutions, the majority of which, directly or indirectly, were under foreign influence.

During the years of the Japanese war and the war of Liberation that followed the defeat of the Japanese, the education system almost collapsed, and when the People's Republic was established in 1949, with some 90 per cent of the population illiterate, schools had to be staffed with such former teachers as could be found, plus everyone who could help to increase literacy by teaching those who knew less. Such a teaching force could not be expected to do other than follow the previous patterns of education.

The Yenan way

In the thirties and forties, in the areas under Communist leadership, a completely different system of education had been growing up. After the Long March of 1934-35[2] the Red Army, with Mao Tse-tung at their head, had settled in an area already liberated from the rule of Chiang Kai-shek, in North Shensi. They drastically reduced taxation and excessive rents, established co-operatives, and in many ways foreshadowed the revolutionary changes that they were able to effect after 1949.

As early as 1927 Mao Tse-tung, in an **Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan,** had written, 'The moment the power of the landlords was overthrown in the rural areas, the peasants' movement for education began . . . Now the peasants are enthusiastically establishing evening classes, which they call peasant schools'.[3] Education in the liberated areas had to start at the simplest, most practical level. Women were persuaded to stop the physically and mentally crippling practice of foot binding (nominally forbidden under Chiang Kai-shek), men to cut off their queues, symbols of subservience to the Manchu dynasty, (which they were supposed to have done in 1911).

In 1937 Edgar Snow had been surprised to find Red Army soldiers not on front line duty spending two hours a day on lectures and discussion periods and another two on learning to read and write. 'What was interesting was the **collective** (emphasis added) use of whatever knowledge they had . . . not only in ideology but in the utilisation of every scrap of technical experience they could mobilise to "raise the cultural level".'[4] They had even begun a limited use of a Latinised Chinese script in order to bring literacy to the masses more quickly.

This insistence that education was for everybody, that it was a life-long process and essential for the success of the struggle for national independence was also noted by the American correspondent Gunther Stein, who visited the Yenan Border Region in 1944.[5] He said that the area seemed like a big elementary school, almost everybody young and old being eager to learn and — **if at all possible** — to teach. Primary and middle schools and universities were only a small part of the educational network — workbench and field-side discussions, wall newspapers, literacy and evening classes, drama groups putting across a 'message', **intellectuals and government workers spending time in factories and communes.**

Another American, Jack Belden, visited the Border Regions during the period when, after the defeat of the Japanese, Chiang Kai-shek had renewed and intensified the war against the Communists. He reported a conversation in 1947 with the head of the Education Department of the Border region government, showing clearly the political reasons for the Communists' insistence on mass education:

> Education is not a way of life in itself: it is only an instrument. Since anyone can use this instrument, it has a class nature. In Chiang Kai-shek's areas, I found that education was used as a tool to forge servile followers for Chiang Kai-shek. But here in the Liberated Areas, we try to use this tool to make the educated people servants of the masses. There is another point. Education cannot be divorced from life but must be combined with reality. John Dewey says: '*Education is life: school is society*'. But we say 'Life is education: society is a school'. That is why we take the living material around us as subject matters for education. Our education is aimed at the ignorant farmers and the petty bourgeoisie: that is, 90 per cent of the people, and not at the landlords, a very few of the people.6

As teachers were in short supply and the pupils illiterate peasants,

> The Communist solution was both simple and typical. They combined education with life. Instead of drilling the peasant in school (except in winter) the Communists began teaching him how to read by showing him characters connected with his daily life and occupation. Thus a shepherd would be taught the characters for sheep, dog, stick, grass and so on. A farmer would learn the characters for field, millet, wheat, mule and the like. The methods of teaching were also as ingenious as they were pleasant. A school child would go around at the noon recess to the homes of five or six housewives and paste on the front door, the living room table, and the kitchen stove the characters for each of these objects. The next day the schoolboy would bring the next characters. Or, as I saw, a farmer ploughing in his field would put up one character on a big board at each end of the field . . . In village after village I have seen these clods of the soil, hitherto barred from any education, poring over lessons, trooping to the winter schools, watching rural character teams perform on the threshing ground, listening to newscasts broadcast through hand megaphones, and studying the slogans painted on the walls, spelling them out in this tortured but practical way.7

Belden also describes how school children had to make their own ink brushes, and teachers, for lack of text books, produced lesson sheets for their pupils — and for each other. Schools had to be prepared for instant evacuation and camouflaged against air raids — so everything concerned with education was practical, flexible and totally integrated with and known by the community.

That the Chinese Communist philosophy of education developed these methods of teaching and learning at the same time as the philosophy and methods were being shaped by practical circumstances is clearly shown in the following extracts from the regulations of two universities set up during the Yenan period. The first is from the Regulations of the Education Department, North China Union

University 1944. This university was set up in 1939 in Yenan; from then until 1949 it moved over much of north western China as the fortunes of war dictated and now forms part of Peking University (Pelta).

> **Methods of teaching leadership**
> The principles should be: unity of theory and practice, mutual necessity of education and social reconstruction and co-operation between teacher and student.
>
> (i) Educational methods should be those which arouse interest and not those aimed at forcing knowledge. Every kind of course should make private study, discussion and research its main objectives. Such methods as asking for a summing-up report after a lecture should also be used. The democratic spirit of finding out and respecting the general feeling should be developed to make the content of study intimately connected with the students' thought and knowledge. Forcible methods of teaching should be opposed.
>
> (ii) This spirit of joining teaching and leadership should use the methods of teaching and leadership which join teaching and doing. Investigation, experiment, lecture and discussion should be equally important. In principle, the time spent in classes each day should not exceed four hours. If there is some really important work, there should be a plan to organise the students to help and experiment, to make a close connection between teaching and practical activities. The doctrinaire spirit of dead book-learning should be thoroughly corrected.8

The second extract is from the Yenan Resistance University Educational Regulations, also 1944 (Yenan was the Communist capital from the end of 1935 until 1947; students came to Yenan from every part of China and many returned to their homes after Liberation. Thus the influence of Yenan University on educational theory and practice was very considerable).

> Definite connections in organisation or in work should be set up with all departments of the Border Region concerned with practical work. According to the actual circumstances, the responsible people in every department concerned with practical work should directly join in the leadership of the educational work in the respective department of this school.
>
> The policies, directives and periodic reports of experience of the different phases of Border Region reconstruction should form the main content of the teaching in this school. The technical courses should take as their standard the present needs of Border Region reconstruction. . . .
>
> The students of this school during their period of study shall be assigned for a definite period to some practical working department for practice.
>
> This school will carry on education combined with production in order, through organised labour, to cultivate the students' constructive spirit, their habit of labour, and their labour viewpoint.
>
> The foundation of teaching in this school shall be self-study and collective material help. Teachers and students should join in study to secure the inter-penetration of book learning and practical experience. At the same time, democracy in teaching should be developed in order to encourage the spirit of asking questions in difficulties and of keenness in discussion. The object is to cultivate the ability of independent thought and criticism.'9

The Two Lines

Thus, even in 1949, two philosophies of education can be seen to be sharply opposed — the old compounded of restricted class education, rigorously selective, remote and scholarly, producing an 'expert' caste apart from and contemptuous of the people; and the Communist, practising its professed theory that education was an essential instrument of class struggle and revolution, and that therefore everyone should be educated: that education should be a co-operative, collaborative process with the teacher learning from the taught as he taught them: that productive labour was the basis of society and that therefore education must be seen to be an integral part of productive labour by regular student participation in productive labour — more, that all theoretical work must stem from productive labour. The history of education from 1949 to the present day has been a record of the struggle between the representatives of these two contending philosophies.

The Common Programme

After the final defeat of the Kuomintang in 1949, the Government of the newly-established People's Republic of China issued a temporary constitution. Their plans for education were set out in 7 Articles of the Common Programme, and show that the experience of the Yenan period was to be used to guide educational policy and practice in the whole of China.

Article 41: The culture and education of the People's Republic of China are new democratic, that is national, scientific and popular. The main tasks for raising the cultural level of the people are: training of personnel for national construction work: liquidating of feudal, comprador, Facist ideology: and developing of the ideology of serving the people.
Article 42: Love for the fatherland and the people, love of labour, love of science and the taking care of public property shall be promoted as the public spirit of all nationals of the People's Republic of China.
Article 43: Efforts shall be made to develop the natural sciences to place them at the service of industrial, agricultural and national defence construction. Scientific discoveries and inventions shall be encouraged and rewarded, and scientific knowledge shall be popularised.
Article 44: The application of a scientific historical viewpoint to the study and interpretation of history, economics, politics, culture and international affairs shall be promoted. Outstanding works of social science shall be encouraged and rewarded.
Article 45: Literature and the arts shall be promoted to serve the people, to enlighten the political consciousness of the people, and to encourage the labour enthusiasm of the people. Outstanding works of literature and the arts shall be encouraged and rewarded. The people's drama and cinema shall be developed.
Article 46: The method of education of the People's Government shall reform the old educational system, subject matter and teaching methods systematically according to plan.
Article 47: In order to meet the widespread needs of revolutionary work and national construction work, universal education shall be carried out. Middle and higher education shall be strengthened: technical education shall be stressed: the education of workers during their spare time and the education of cadres who are at their posts shall be strengthened: and revolutionary political education shall be accorded to young intellectuals and old-style intellectuals in a planned and systematic manner.10

The School System in 1949

Schooling before 1949 was divided into primary and secondary stages. Primary education was divided into junior primary and senior primary schools. Children entered junior school at about 7 years of age and left at 13, though these ages are only approximate since they often started late. It is generally estimated that not more than 15 per cent of Chinese children received even primary education, and a disproportionately large number of these were in the cities on the eastern seaboard.

An even smaller proportion attended secondary schools. Some of these schools had been founded by foreign missionary bodies; following the American pattern secondary education was divided into two stages, junior middle, approximately from 13 to 16 years of age, senior middle from 16 to 18. The number of these senior middle schools was very small indeed, and entrance was by a rigorously selective examination. There were three types of middle school — general academic, teacher training schools and vocational schools. In all of them the influence of the old classical Chinese tradition was strong: the curriculum was narrowly scholastic and unrelated to life, certainly to the lives of peasants and workers. It was a rare phenomenon for the son of a worker or a peasant to gain a secondary school place: not only would he have had to be financially supported through primary school, but he would have to pass an entrance examination even to junior middle school. In addition he would have had to work to help support the family. Most middle schools were boarding schools, making them financially even more unattainable.

Higher education, in the form of universities, teacher training colleges and technical colleges, had been unplanned. Institutions had been set up, often under foreign financial and cultural influences, in the large eastern cities. Though there were periodic student revolts, notably in 1937, in the main the secret police of the Kuomintang succeeded in stifling student or staff initiative. 'Sudden and secret arrests, mysterious disappearances, assassinations, a covert reign of terror prevailed in academic circles . . . the Chinese people groaned under a regime Fascist in every quality except efficiency.'[11]

This was the system in 1949. To carry out the tasks outlined in the Common Programme teachers were needed, not only in enormous quantities but with a revolutionary ideology and the determination to transform every aspect of the educational process. And, as we have seen, few such teachers had as yet been trained. Almost all existing teachers were of the old school. Some stayed because they were time-servers, many because they were patriotic Chinese and gave the Communist Party credit for at last creating the conditions for an independent united and stable China; but very few were aquainted with the Communist philosophy of education and fewer still had experienced with workers and peasants the educational lessons of the Yenan period.

'In the problem of transforming education it is the teachers who are the main problem'[12]. Mao Tse-tung's words were — and are — apt (and not only for China!), but the immediate and urgent task was the training of new-style administrators and technicians to run the country. Three-year short term middle schools for peasants, workers and People's Liberation Army men (PLA) were set up. After completing these courses they could be trained further in colleges and universities such as the Chinese People's University, which was established in 1950.

At the same time efforts were made to re-educate the old intelligentsia. To this end teachers were sent out into the country to take part in agrarian reform and into political training schools where their academic ways of thought would be sharply questioned by peasants and workers.

1952-55: Educational expansion and Soviet influence

In spite of these efforts the enormous expansion of Chinese education in the 1950's was largely on traditional pre-Liberation lines, far removed from the practice of the Yenan period. The influence of the old system was strong, and as yet there had been no organised discussion of an educational system that would both reflect and help to further the development of socialism in China. Moreover, this was a period of very considerable Soviet influence on Chinese education. Building more or less from scratch, it was almost inevitable that Soviet help should be requested; and help was given freely in material and personnel. Between 1952 and 1956 1,400 text books and over 2,000 literary works were translated from the Russian.[13] With the text books came the teachers. More than 600 Russians taught in Chinese colleges and universities from 1952-58. Soviet teachers trained a large number of Chinese teachers, especially in the field of political theory. 700 young teachers were trained for the People's University and 2,000 for schools. By 1959 36,000 Chinese students had been trained in Soviet universities.

The teaching methods were formal and authoritarian; texts were dictated and had to be learned parrot-fashion.

> The teachers' lecture notes were copied from Soviet teaching materials which were without alteration of a single word, copied out on the blackboard by teachers at the classes and then duly copied into their notebooks by the students. In the case of a student not understanding a point, then the teacher would confront him with the stick, with the remark 'this teaching material originates from the Soviet Union.'
>
> (Lu Pu-tong, a Professor of the North Western University.) 14

Even though they did not like the Soviet texts, the logic of which was quite alien to them, these **methods** must have been welcome — and familiar — to the older teachers, with their class background and upbringing, and their own professional training: for even in 1958, of 2,474 professors and assistant professors in 46 institutions of higher education, an absolute majority came from landlord and bourgeois families and more than 90 per cent had received their education either abroad or in the old China.[15]

They were not, however, as welcome to the students. As early as 1955 Chang Chung-lin, Director of Planning of the Ministry of Higher Education reported that in the previous year over 7,000 of the 288,000 students in institutions of higher education had had to suspend their studies because of illness, inferior academic attainment and other causes.

> The figure was a staggering one, for in actuality there was quite a number of students who, instead of dropping their studies outright, managed to retain their seats without promotion or by

demotion. In certain classes students of this category amount to 30 per cent of the enrolment.

He criticised the contents of curricula as having a direct consequence on the quality of the students.

The hundred-odd kinds of specialisation plans and the several hundred kinds of pedagogical programmes which are being centrally experimented with throughout the country presently adopt in the main the pedagogical plans and pedagogical programmes enforced by the Soviet Institutions of higher education before 1954 as blueprints and have been rendered into a more compressed form.

To learn the pedagogical contents from the Soviet Union is no doubt a necessity, but the deviation lies in the inability to have this linked adequately with the realities of China.16

People's Education published in 1956 gives graphic accounts by students of how the educational system appeared to them and how it affected them.

College students are really too busy. We have no Sunday: it is merely the "seventh day of the week". Many students spend their weekends in the library. Others carry books or Russian language cards with them in the toilet and in the streetcar or bus. The period of reviewing for the examination is even worse. Due to excessive tension, the students constantly suffer from headaches, fatigue, insomnia and neurasthenia, and such symptoms become worse daily. It is not unusual for them to talk in their sleep or recite articles or themes. There is a general loss of appetite, accompanied by weight reduction in the case of most of the students. What is more serious is that there are instances of fainting in the dining room, library or even in the examination hall. Some students become so tense at an examination that they cannot read the questions.

They complained about the number of courses.

Take the school education specialisation in our department as an example. The first year consists of eight subjects, involving 26 hours of lectures a week. Besides the 5 hours of psychology which is a specialisation subject, the rest are almost entirely political theory and culture courses. Even the teachers do not know the reasons for such courses. For instance, the Modern Literature Selection professor once remarked in the classroom 'I do not know why first year education requires this course, but anyway it is good for you.'

They criticised classroom teaching:

The teaching attitude, method and comprehension of the material of some teachers are not satisfactory to the students. For example, in Logic, for the past year. It has consisted of the teacher reading his lecture notes and the students taking them down like recording machines. Some students, after attending a two-period class, have to spend more than that much time to verify and supplement their notes. The teacher relies on his notes to lecture, and if he should lose a few papers, he will not be able to continue with his lecture. . . . Though incessantly talking about cultivating the student's independent work ability and co-ordinating theory with practice, the teachers, in practical teaching, only emphasise note-taking.17

Mass literacy campaigns

Lenin said: A nation of illiterates cannot build communism. Although there are many illiterates in our country today, we cannot wait until illiteracy is eliminated before commencing to build socialism. This has created an acute contradiction.

Aside from the fact that many children have no schools to go to when they reach school age, there is also a large number of teenagers and young people with no schools to go to either, though they are well past the age for entrance. As for adults, it goes without saying, the situation is even worse.

This is a serious problem which must be solved *in the course of bringing* co-operation to agriculture: in fact it is only during this stage that a solution can be found. After the peasants form co-ops they demand to be taught to read and write. For them it is a matter of economic necessity. Once they form co-ops they have collective strength. The situation changes completely. They can organise their own literacy courses.

Mao Tse-tung, (ed.) **Socialist upsurge in China's Countryside,** Foreign Languages Press, Peking 1957.

The mass literacy campaigns of the 1950's were organised in ways sharply contrasting with the sterile approach to formal school education. Based on the experiences of the Yenan period, practical methods of teaching were used and strongly reminiscent of the methods described by Jack Belden (p.7). In the winter schools that were set up in the countryside, the local people themselves produced their own text books, starting with their own names and the names of tools, animals, fields, crops. Peasants began to 'learn farm work', memorizing the characters for the different farming operations as they performed them, being tested and helped to revise during rest periods by those who could read. There were evening classes to reinforce what had been learned. Objects all over the village were labelled. 'Literacy check points' were set up in some markets and village streets, where passers-by were stopped and given a reading test. These movements culminated in a nation-wide drive for literacy in the middle 50's, linked with the campaign for collectivisation and the language reforms — simplification of characters, etc. In 1956 the Communist Party and the State Council issued a directive setting out the aims of wiping out illiteracy in five to seven years. A typical example of this purposeful drive is in the building of the Miyun Reservoir, north of Peking, when one or two hours a day were spent throughout the two-year construction period in teaching the 3,500 workers, formerly illiterate peasants, to read.[18]

The literacy campaign was also carried on in factories. Richman,[19] who visited about 38 industrial enterprises in 1966 refers to a Ministry of Education decree of 1958 requiring factories to provide education for the workers. Larger factories did set up schools at all levels: smaller ones had established literacy classes, and in many cases primary and junior middle schools. These were spare-time schools for workers, at least 10 per cent of whom were engaged in some kind of spare-time education. One of Richman's examples is of the Tientsin Shoe Factory, where in 1949 80 per cent of the workers had been illiterate: by the mid-1960's this had been reduced to 6 per cent. Most of the enterprises he visited claimed to have reduced the illiteracy rate from well over 50 per cent to under 10 per cent in 1958. He saw many workers, alone or in small groups, studying characters during breaks, being helped by their workmates, reading, writing, poring over drawings, designs, charts and other types of reports and instructions.[20]

By 1956 a nation-wide educational system had been established and consolidated. More than 64 million children were attending primary school (compared with under 24 million in 1949-50), there were more than 6 million middle school pupils (perhaps one million in 1949), and 441,000 higher education students, representing a four-fold increase in seven years. Yet, as we have seen, serious contradictions had developed and were developing. A hierarchy was being formed. The bureaucracy in education and the teachers favoured children from bourgeois backgrounds, and these still formed the overwhelming majority of university students, destined for the professional and administrative work and disdaining physical labour and the life of the countryside. Factory workers and peasants on the land were still implicitly expected to confine their attention to production.

Nor was a belief in the necessity for the **extension** of education shared by all leading Party officials. In 1956 Liu Shao-chi, who became President of the Republic two years later, and who was exposed as the leading revisionist during the Cultural Revolution, stated:

> Universal education is still not too urgent now: the question now is still higher education and the need for specialists.[21]

The situation in education was a reflection of the general economic, social and political situation. The period 1949-52 had been one of consolidation and recovery from the devastation of the anti-Japanese and civil wars. This period was followed by three years of rapid economic growth and collectivisation of most of the agricultural land, with the intention of placing power effectively in the hands of the poor and lower middle peasants (though during the Cultural Revolution it was revealed that in many areas this change in class relations had not been accomplished). Generally speaking, by 1956 a socialist foundation of the country's economy had been established.

But the very pace of the economic and social advances had created its own difficulties and contradictions. Many Party workers, the spearheads of these advances, had been guilty of the common fault of driving instead of persuading, of adopting bureaucratic methods — and some had used their position to gain advantages for themselves and their children. At the same time millions of men and women, now freed from their former conditions of feudal misery, participating (and urged by the Party to do so) in collectivisation of land, running of factories and many other aspects of their lives, were not going to put up with petty bureaucrats, Party or not.

The Hundred Flowers campaign

It was in this situation in May 1956, that Mao initiated a campaign to encourage criticism in the cultural sphere, criticism of the Party itself and its members. His slogan was 'Let a hundred flowers bloom, a hundred schools of thought contend.'

There was no doubt that the support of intellectuals was needed for the further development of socialism. In 1955 the official Party newspaper had written:

> There are about 5 million people who can rank either as intellectuals or as cadres of a certain level of culture, both within the Party itself and in the various political and cultural organisations. Most of them, let us say three million, are capable of acquiring a fundamental knowledge of Marxism-Leninism, of understanding the difference between materialism and idealism, of grasping the essentials of dialectical materialism and of educating the broad masses of the population which are still on a rather low cultural level. All the Party committees, at all levels, must take up this matter seriously. (**People's Daily,** 11 April, 1955.)

Chou En-lai went further in 1956, when at the Supreme State Conference he said:

> The very large majority of intellectuals have become State officials; they are serving the cause of Socialism and already form a part of the working class. . . . Among the front-rank intellectuals (about 100,000) 45 per cent are progressive elements actively supporting the Communist Party, the People's Government and socialism, wholeheartedly serving the people. . . . Among the others, 40 per cent have travelled only halfway. . . . 10 per cent are either politically unconscious or definitely opposed. . . . A very small number can be classed as counter-revolutionary.22

Intellectuals responded to the 'hundred flowers' campaign with widespread criticism. We have already quoted students' dissatisfaction with their conditions, their courses and the ways in which they were taught. General criticism of the Party took two forms. One was that many Party members were not living up to its proclaimed ideals, that they were becoming arrogant and dictatorial, 'new mandarins', that they were acquiring special privileges for themselves and their children. The other was an attack on aspects of Communist Party policy such as land collectivisation, the admission to higher educational institutions of students from peasant and worker families and the work-study programme calling on intellectuals to work regularly in factories or on the land. These criticisms were on liberal reformist lines, but some went even further, showing that counter-revolutionary ideas were far from dead:

> Marxism is out of date. . . . Instead we must learn from the democracy of the capitalist countries, and turn to a new interpretation of capitalism.
>
> What a dull thing is this socialism.23

Though this open counter-revolutionary type of attack was minimal, the mass of criticisms indicated that the educational system which had been built up to such an extent on the Soviet model needed total reconstruction if the revolution was not to be undermined.

Following the 'hundred flowers' campaign the Party started another — a 'rectification' campaign of abuses which, as we have indicated, had developed in various Party organisations. They were characterised as 'commandism', 'bureaucratism' and 'mandarinism' — abuses common in officials all over the world: what **was** uncommon was the initiation of such a campaign by a Party in power.

At this critical juncture — critical not only for education, of course, but for the whole future of Chinese socialism — Mao Tse-tung delivered one of his most important policy-forming speeches, **On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People.**[24] It was given at the 11th Session (Enlarged) of the Supreme State Conference — February 1957, and published the following June. He stressed the unification of the country and the successes which had been achieved in a short space of time. But this unity, these successes should not give rise to complacency, nor did they mean that there were no more contradictions in the new society.

> Our People's Government is one that genuinely represents the people's interests, it is a government that serves the people. Nevertheless, there are still certain contradictions between the government and the people. These include contradictions among the interests of the state, the interests of the collective and the interests of the individual: between democracy and centralism: between the leadership and the led: and the contradiction arising from the bureaucratic style of work of certain government workers in their relations with the masses. All these are contradictions among the people.

Among the contradictions among the people Mao dealt with the question of intellectuals. The question that now arose, he said, was how they could best meet the needs of the new society and how they could be helped to do so. They were needed for the colossal task of socialist construction; they should be trusted and treated in a more friendly fashion. 'Many of our comrades are not good at getting along with intellectuals. They are stiff with them, lack respect for their work. . . .'

Intellectuals should not be complacent. 'They must continue to remould themselves, gradually shed their bourgeois world outlook, and acquire a proletarian, Communist world outlook. . . .' This would take a long time and patience was required.

Mao spoke of unhealthy tendencies, a falling-off of ideological and political work among students and intellectuals. They should study Marxism-Leninism, current events and political affairs.

> The ideological remoulding carried on in the past was necessary and has yielded positive results. But it was carried on in a somewhat rough and ready fashion and the feelings of some people were hurt — this was not good. We must avoid such shortcomings in future. . . . Our educational policy must enable everyone who receives an education to develop morally, intellectually and physically and become a well-educated worker imbued with socialist consciousness. We must

> spread the idea of building our country through industriousness and thrift. We must help all our young people to understand that ours is still a very poor country and that we cannot change this situation radically in a short time, and that only through the united efforts of our younger generation and all our people, working with their own hands, can China be made strong and prosperous within a period of several decades. . . .

The Great Leap Forward

How were the intellectuals to be 'remoulded'? The criticisms expressed by intellectuals during the Hundred Flowers campaign indicated that basically many of them wanted to regain the élitist positions of power and influence of pre-Liberation days, to run education, especially higher education, without Party interference, to remain apart from and above the peasants and workers.

The Great Debate and rectification campaign which developed was followed by the Great Leap Forward in 1958. This was a movement designed to stimulate production in the factories and collectivisation in the countryside, by giving workers and peasants confidence in their own abilities and more responsibility for running their own affairs, thus foreshadowing the Cultural Revolution. The back-yard blast furnaces, so derided in the Western press, not only added materially to iron and steel production, but tore away the veil of mystery surrounding industrial processes: peasants, in making metal, learned that together they could make anything (and in learning to understand the industrial process they drew closer to the working class in the factories).

Involving students and intellectuals in the Great Leap Forward was necessary for two complementary reasons, practical and ideological. Their participation was necessary for the great increases in production that were needed for the development of a socialist economy. As the Vice Minister of Education told Edgar Snow in 1960,

> Today we have 91 million in primary schools, next year it will be more. Logically we should expect that within 10 years 50 million or more will be in middle schools. But obviously our economy could not tolerate the withdrawal of so many people from the labour force.
>
> From now on secondary and higher education has to be combined with rational solutions of man-power distribution problems in our basic socialist construction. In the future there will be more work and study combinations, not less. Experience has told us that is the only way. It is the fundamental concept of our educational system today.25

Of even greater importance was the ideological reason. If students and teachers of all ages regularly took part in productive labour in factory and field they would lose the sense of the superiority of the educated élite, they would come to understand that any advance, cultural, economic, political or whatever, depended absolutely and completely on the success of the productive process.

During April and June 1958, the Central Committee of the Party convened conferences on educational work, which resulted in an authoritative statement — **Education Must be Combined with Productive Labour.** It bears the stamp of the 'Yenan' attitude to education, as opposed to the bourgeois line.

> We insist on the educational principle of all-round development. We consider that the only

method to train human beings in all-round development is to educate them to serve working-class politics and combine education with productive labour. . . . Bourgeois pedagogues do not agree. They consider the only method to train people to have what they call 'all-round development' is to read books and learn by rote. They are absolutely against students learning politics and, in particular, students becoming labourers. According to our educational principles of all-round development, we can and must rely on the masses to run education. According to the bourgeois educational principles of so-called 'all round development', they can rely only on experts to run education: they cannot rely on the masses. According to our educational principle of all-round development, education must be under the leadership of the Communist Party. According to the bourgeois educational principle of so-called 'all-round development', education can only be led by the experts: it does not need the leadership of the Communist Party, as the Communist Party is 'a layman'. . . . This is essentially a struggle between proletarian and bourgeois ideas.

The chief mistake or defect in our educational work has been the divorce of education from productive labour. . . . In 1954 . . . the Central Committee of the Party raised the question of adding productive labour to the curricula of the schools. But the proposal encountered obstruction and was not carried through at that time. . . . It is only now that this policy of the Party has been carried out on a nationwide scale. Education must serve politics, must be combined with productive labour, and must be led by the Party.

Because the principle of combining education with productive labour is beginning to go into operation, with schools setting up their own factories and farms, and factories and agricultural co-operatives establishing their own schools on a large scale, the phenomenon of students who are at the same time workers and peasants, and of workers and peasants who are students at the same time is beginning to appear.26

Four principles of running schools by applying the mass line under Party leadership were laid down in the statement.

1. **To combine unity with diversity.**

The purpose was unified — to train Socialist-minded, educated workers; but the schools could be run by central or local authorities, factories and mines, agricultural co-operatives (1958 was the year of the formation of the people's communes, but the term was not yet generally in use). They could be full-time, or part-work-part-study, or spare-time schools: the latter type would be merged in the second category when the growth of production and the shortening of working hours permitted, and all schools would then become free.

2. **To combine the spreading of education widely with the raising of educational levels.**

The part-time and spare-time schools would popularise education, meet most of the expenditure themselves and find teachers locally in accordance with the principle that 'every capable person can teach'.

They would gradually raise their educational levels by improving their curricula, equipment and teaching staff with government aid. Theoretical and practical work should be interlinked.

3. **To combine overall planning with decentralisation.**

Bringing into play the initiative of the central government departments and the local authorities and the people, so as to develop education 'with greater, faster, better and more economical results.'

4. **To apply the mass line in the political, administrative, pedagogic and research work in the schools.**

Views must be aired openly and freely — the making and exhibiting of **dazibao** (big character posters) was especially mentioned. Teachers and students should combine in working out courses under the leadership of the Party; people with practical experience should be invited to give lectures. Democratic relations should be established between the leadership and the rank and file and between teachers and students. Experience shows that remarkable achievements have been made where these methods have been adopted.

'We must realise', stated the document in its conclusion, 'that to carry the combination of education with productive labour into effect means a fight with the old traditions that have per-

> sisted for thousands of years. . . . This principle, which conforms to the people's desires, will certainly prevail.'

It was a significant document, laying down the broad policy for the development of education that was, for instance, spelt out in greater detail in the Kirin programme of 1969, to which we shall refer later. Practical implementations of this policy were immediate, many and varied. Entrance requirements for higher education were changed so that by 1959 just over half of the new students came from peasants' or workers' families. Students helped in large-scale waterworks construction projects, set up small workshops, blast furnaces, repair shops. Factories set up and ran schools, new people's communes started half-work, half-study schools, and the curriculum in these schools was more closely geared to the practical needs of the organisations running them, with alternating periods of school, study and productive labour.

Factories also set up study sessions for their workers, ranging from literacy classes to advanced level lectures. Yang Hsiu-feng, Minister of Education, told the Second National People's Congress in 1959 that the results of the literacy campaign in 1958 surpassed those of the previous eight years: and that 30 million people had enrolled in various types of spare-time schools of varying standards organised by mines, factories and people's communes.

Class Struggles in Education, 1961-5

But these developments were not maintained at their first enthusiastic level. The three years 1959-61 were marked by severe climatic difficulties and consequent bad harvests — 'the three hard years' — necessitating concentration on economic — mainly food production — problems so that available foodstuffs would be justly shared out; other developments had to take second place during this period. In 1960, also, China's plans for developing her socialist economy received a severe blow when the Soviet Union abruptly terminated all aid and withdrew their technicians and teachers.

These difficulties gave Mao's political opponents — those later described as taking the capitalist road — an opportunity to criticise his policies in every aspect, including education. In 1959 Mao had written

> The struggle . . . is a class struggle, a continuation of the life and death struggle between the major antagonistic classes — the bourgeoisie and the proletariat — which has gone on all through the socialist revolution in the last 10 years. This kind of struggle, it seems, will continue in China and in the Party for at least 20 years and possibly half a century. In short, the struggle will cease only when classes die out completely.27

The struggle between the two lines was becoming increasingly obvious. It was re-emphasised by the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1962 and again in 1963:

> A small number of persons . . . who have not yet undergone socialist remoulding, always attempt to depart from the socialist road and turn to the capitalist road whenever there is an oppor-

> tunity. Class struggle is inevitable under these circumstances. . . . This class struggle is complicated, tortuous, with ups and downs and sometimes it is very sharp. This class struggle inevitably finds expression within the Party. . . .28
>
> Serious and sharp class struggle is taking place in Chinese society. . . . Strong leadership is needed in this (socialist education) campaign. We must rely on the poor and lower-middle peasant organisations, conduct thorough investigations and study among the masses, and boldly rouse them to action.29

The attitude of the opposition to the part-work, part-study schools took two forms. On the one hand they branded these sihools as 'inferior', 'irregular', 'low in quality'. On the other they exploited their existence to produce a two-tier system, one part-work, part-study, and one full-time education. Within the full-time sector where the schools on the Soviet model for children with special talent. This was the theory, but in practice those admitted were the children of intellectuals, of bourgeois families, of Party cadres — of those with a pull.

David Milton, an American who taught English in Peking from 1964 to 1969, describes one of these select middle schools as follows:

> Two of my sons enrolled in the Peking University middle school in the fall of 1965, after a year of language preparation. The physical layout was similar to that of many older high schools in the United States. The instruction, following the Russian model, was more formal; students were required to stand up whenever the teacher entered the room, teaching consisted of formal lecturing with little discussion by students, and homework and examinations were rigorous. Many of the students were the sons and daughters of army officers, government officials and intellectuals; they were all college bound.30

These schools, while re-creating an élite, perpetuated the former narrowly academic curricula, negating the unity of theory and practice and the primacy of productive labour. Higher education followed a similar pattern: for instance the training at the Peking Medical School was completely theoretical: it was five years before **any** clinical work was undertaken, and few patients were seen during the whole of the seven year course; nor was there any discussion of the social aspect of medicine.

Chou Yang, the Deputy Director of the Central Committee's Propaganda Department, had declared in 1960:

> We must stress more writing: writing the characters correctly without making errors, and understanding the grammar. It is also necessary to advocate the reciting of books, which is a Chinese tradition.31

Though the correct writing of characters was clearly necessary, the advice about the reciting of books was directly contrary to the Yenan way of learning as a collaborative process between teacher and student. It was a didactic method, designed to preserve the idea of the superiority of the teacher-scholar, the hierarchy of the bourgeois intellectual. It was still prevalent in the mid-60's among the traditionally minded teachers, who clung jealously to their professional status and in practice were reluctant to admit the Party's role in education. They defended the examination system, though it was clear that this system favoured students of educated parents over those from peasant or worker homes. They defended the practice of promotion by grades, a system which maintained the dependence on the teacher and subservience to the teacher, while it encouraged the growth of individualism and selfishness at the expense of collaborative and collective learning.

Mao described the situation in education in a conversation with a Nepalese delegation in 1964:

> Our education is fraught with problems, the most prominent of which is dogmatism. We are in the process of reforming our educational system. The school years are too long, courses too many, and various methods of teaching unsatisfactory. The children learn textbooks and concepts which remain merely textbooks and concepts; they know nothing else. . . . The school years are too long, courses too many, and the method of teaching is by injection instead of through the imagination. The method of examination is to treat candidates as enemies and ambush them. Therefore I advise you not to entertain any blind faith in the Chinese educational system. Do not regard it as a good system. Any drastic change is difficult, as many people would oppose it. At present a few may agree to the adoption of new methods, but many would disagree. I may be pouring cold water on you. You expect to see something good, but I only tell you what is bad.32

Mao went on to stress that much of the teaching was completely divorced from reality; and reality meant keeping in contact with the people and learning from them. 'We have nothing marvellous, only things we have learned from ordinary people. . . . Therefore if we want to be teachers, we have to be pupils to begin with.'

By the middle 60's those who supported Mao's line were becoming concerned with the problem of 'successors' — young people born into a comparatively secure society with material conditions steadily improving and without personal experience of the bitter struggles and sufferings of their parents. As Soong Ching-ling, Sun Yat-sen's widow, wrote in 1965:

> It is unimaginable to think that after our working people made such sacrifices to win power we should fritter it away just by neglecting to educate succeeding generations in what it took to obtain that victory. To think only of their present happiness, of exposing them only to the 'peaceful sunshine' and 'clear blue skies' would be wrong and doing an injustice to their future well-being . . . the working people must educate their children from the standpoint of the working class.33

Mao had written as early as 1937 about contradictions between the superstructure and the economic base.

> When the superstructure (politics, culture, etc.) obstructs the development of the economic base, political and cultural changes become principal and decisive. Are we going against materialism when we say this? No. The reason is that while we recognise that in the general development of history the material determines the mental and social being determines social consciousness, we also — and indeed must — recognise the reaction of mental on material things, of social consciousness on social being and of the superstructure on the economic base.34

By the middle 60's China's socialist economy was well established. There had been some transformation of the superstructure, but it was in this sector that the class struggle was most apparent — and most dangerous to further socialist development. The Cultural Revolution can only be understood in the context of class forces opposing the transformation of a bourgeois culture into a socialist culture. These class forces were made up of four main groups:

1. The traditional national bourgeoisie, whose holdings had been bought out by the government in the 50's still survived as individuals. Their influence was not very great, because they were known and thus discounted. All the same, they were a potential source of danger.
2. The former rich, upper-middle and middle peasants were a base for bourgeois ideas of ownership. Although absorbed into the communes (even **because** absorbed into the communes) they still could see endless ways in which they might enrich themselves if only the collective economy were weakened. And so they appealed to the grasping, individualistic side of peasant ideology and nibbled away at the edges of the commune ideology by pushing for bigger private plots, expanded free markets, the right to buy and sell, the right to save and buy land. . . . This was the capitalist creed; and the appeal to immediate self-interest, to the detriment of long-range **collective** interests, was a stronger potential source of danger than that of the expropriated capitalists.
3. Given this potential base, the bourgeois intellectuals in the educational system constituted a very real threat to the firm establishment of socialist ideology in the minds and actions of the young 'successors' of the revolution. As Hinton says, 'The class struggle under socialism amounts to the bourgeoisie trying to remould the world to suit themselves while the working class tries to remould the world to suit working people.'35
4. Most dangerous of all was the faction inside the Communist Party that followed the Khrushchev line of revisionism, of abandonment of the Marxist principle of the persistence of class struggle in new forms during the socialist period, and of dependence on privileged and exclusive 'experts'.

The revisionist movement of 'goulash communism' which originated in the Soviet Union and affected every other Communist Party in the world, did not escape China.

These Party members opposed each basic process of the socialist transformation of China and, in times of difficulty urged the abandonment of socialist policies in the name of 'efficiency' and 'common sense'. They were characterised by Mao as 'Party people in authority taking the capitalist road'. Their leader was Liu Shao-chi, the President of the Republic, who was generally referred to during the Cultural Revolution as 'China's Khrushchev', since he favoured experts, whatever their politics, denied existence of class strugggle and believed in a gradualist transition to socialism.

Thus the internal situation was critical by the middle 60's; it was made doubly dangerous because of the menace of foreign invasion. The United States had for years been stepping-up the war in Vietnam and in 1965 had started the mass bombing of North Vietnam. Correspondents close to the White House were stating openly that the real target of the US government was China, and that Vietnam was only one phase of the thrust of American power. The USA could not control the vast resources of the underdeveloped countries of South-east Asia, India and Indonesia until it had destroyed the government and the rising industrial power of China. The public debates in authoritative circles about 'pre-emptive strikes' to destroy China's cities and key industrial centres were too blatant to be ignored. It was necessary for the whole population to be unified; and the people themselves had to fight and defeat the enemy within. In this fight the youth — the 'successors' to the revolution — played a leading role.

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution

While their main task is to study, they should, in addition to their studies, learn other things, that is, industrial work, farming and military affairs. They should also criticize the bourgeoisie. The period of schooling should be shortened, education should be revolutionised, and the domination of our schools by bourgeois intellectuals should by no means be allowed to continue.
Mao Tse-tung, 7 May, 1966.)

The Cultural Revolution may be said to have begun when the vice-mayor of Peking, Wu Han, published a play against Mao's policy. This was followed by newspaper articles in the same vein, supported by the mayor of Peking, a member not only of the Central Committee of the Party but of the Political Bureau as well, and by many other influential Party leaders. Mao and his supporters were under no illusion as to the serious nature of the attacks. An editorial in the **Liberation Army Daily** included this warning:

> We must never think that the frenzied attack launched against us by this handful of revisionist and bourgeois elements is merely a 'scholar's rebellion' which will amount to nothing big. We must never regard our struggle against them as only 'paper polemics' that has no effect on the overall situation. In fact, every counter-revolutionary restoration starts in the realm of the mind — including ideology, the superstructure, theoretical and academic work, literature and art — so as to win over public opinion. (4 May, 1966.)

The struggle became open when Nieh Yuan-tzu, a woman cadre of the Philosophy Department at Peking University put up a **dazibao**[36] on 25 May criticising Lu Ping, the President of the University, for suppressing debate about Wu Han's play.

> By 'guiding' the masses not to hold big meetings, not to put up big-character posters, and by creating all kinds of taboos, aren't you suppressing the masses' revolution, not allowing them to make revolution and opposing their revolution? We will never permit you to do this![37]

This was broadcast to the nation on 1 June on Mao's instructions, (he called it 'China's first Marxist-Leninist **dazibao**') and was followed by even more scathing criticism by the students of neighbouring Tsinghua University of **their** President, who was also a member of the Central Committee and the Minister for Higher Education.[38] Revolt against the bureaucratic line of Liu Shao-chi and his followers now spread into many parts of the country until it became nation-wide.

This revolt was led in the first instance by the students, who have traditionally played a pioneering role in all the revolutionary movements of the 20th century, including the great revolution of 4 May, 1919, the anti-Japanese resistance movement of 30 May, 1925 and the movement against the Japanese of 9 December, 1935. The Chinese refer to this phenomenon as a law of development of the Chinese revolution. 'All Chinese revolutionary movements in contemporary Chinese history have begun with student movements and led to the worker and peasant movements, to the integration of revolutionary intellectuals with the worker-peasant masses. This is an objective law.'[39]

To facilitate the development of the Cultural Revolution and to enable the widest possible debate concerning the future transformation of the education system, the Central Committee and the State Council decided on 13 June to postpone student enrolment in higher education institutions for six months and to transform entrance examination methods.[40] On 18 June the **People's Daily** carried an editorial calling for 'root and branch change in the educational system'. It attacked the system of enrolling students by examination as placing 'not proletarian but bourgeois politics in command; it places school marks in command'. The system 'shuts out many outstanding children of workers, poor and lower-middle peasants, revolutionary cadres, revolutionary armymen and revolutionary martyrs and opens the gates wide to the bourgeoisie to cultivate its own successors'. This elimination of the bourgeois line was to be 'the beginning of a complete revolution in the whole of the old educational system' — all the arrangements for schooling, testing, the content of education must be transformed. 'Further studies must be made as to how to implement the policy of combining education with productive labour.'[41]

During June and July, and in some areas into the early autumn, the institutions controlled by Liu Shao-chi's supporters tried to intimidate students in order to suppress criticism and the progress of the revolution. For example, a work team of Party members was sent in to Tsinghua University by Liu Shao-chi, supposedly to help the student revolutionaries against the University authorities, but actually to sabotage their activities. This work team was secretly led by Wang Kuang-mei, Liu Shao-chi's wife. On 4 August Premier Chou En-lai found it necessary to address a mass rally of 10,000 students and Party workers on the campus. He said that the work teams had made serious mistakes in line, had called revolutionaries counter-revolutionaries and had suppressed the mass movement. They had protected the few by attacking the many, and had put forward a bourgeois reactionary line aimed at protecting the bourgeoisie in power at Tsinghua University and suppressing the revolution.

The next day Mao's own **dazibao** was published in the **People's Daily.**

> China's first Marxist-Leninist big-character poster and Commentator's article on it in Renmin Ribao (People's Daily) are indeed superbly written! Comrades, please read them again. But in the last fifty days or so some leading comrades from the central down to the local levels have acted in a diametrically opposite way. Adopting the reactionary stand of the bourgeoisie, they have enforced a bourgeois dictatorship and struck down the surging movement of the Great Cultural Revouution of the proletariat. They have stood facts on their heads and juggled black and white, encircled and suppressed revolutionaries, stifled opinions differing from their own, imposed a white terror, and felt very pleased with themselves. They have puffed up the arrogance of the bourgeoisie and deflated the morale of the proletariat. How poisonous! Viewed in connexion with the Right deviation in 1962 and the wrong tendency of 1964 which was 'Left' in form but Right in essence, shouldn't this make one wide awake?42

It gave tremendous encouragement to workers, peasants and students who, however critical they might have been of some leading Party functionaries in their organisations, had not up till then realised how deeply entrenched the Liu Shao-chi reactionaries were in the Party. Now they knew that Mao himself saw the destruction of bureaucracy and the bourgeois line as vitally necessary; the floodgates opened and tidal waves of protest and heated debate swept over the whole country.

Neither Mao nor Chou had named Liu Shao-chi or any other of the reactionaries. It would have been easy enough to do so, but it would have solved none of the main contradictions. For the Cultural Revolution to be a true people's revolution, for the superstructure to be socialised to accord with the economic base, it was essential for the people in every organisation — factory, commune, production brigade, university, college and school — to work out and decide in the light of practice and experience what the correct policy was, and hence to unmask those who were obstructing the correct policy, 'waving the red flag to oppose the red flag.'

The Sixteen Points

On 8 August the Central Committee published its 16-point decision, giving encouragement to the struggle and guidance as to how it should be waged — as the following extracts show.

> The masses of the workers, peasants, soldiers, revolutionary intellectuals and revolutionary cadres form the main force in the great Cultural Revolution. Large numbers of revolutionary young people, previously unknown, have become courageous and daring pathbreakers. They are vigorous in action and intelligent. . . . In such a great revolutionary movement, it is hardly *avoidable that* they should show shortcomings of one kind or another, but their main revolutionary orientation has been correct from the beginning. . . .
>
> In the great proletarian Cultural Revolution the only method is for the masses to liberate themselves, and any method of doing things on their behalf must not be used.
>
> Trust the masses, rely on them and respect their initiative. Cast out fear. Don't be afraid of disorder. . . .
>
> . . . The main target of the present movement is those within the Party who are in authority and are taking the capitalist road. . . .
>
> It is normal for the masses to hold different views. Contention between different views is unavoidable, necessary and *beneficial*. . . .
>
> The method to be used in debates is to present the facts, reason things out, and persuade through reasoning. Any method of forcing a minority holding different views to submit is impermissible. The minority should be protected, because sometimes the truth is with the minority. Even if the minority is wrong, they should still be allowed to argue their case and reserve their views.
>
> . . . The cultural revolutionary groups, committees and other organisational forms created by the masses in many schools and units are something new and of great importance. . . .
>
> The struggle of the proletariat against the old ideas, culture, customs and habits left over from all the exploiting classes over thousands of years *will necessarily* take a very, very long time. . . .
>
> It is necessary to institute a system of general elections, like that of the Paris Commune, for electing members to the cultural revolutionary groups and committees and delegates to the cultural revolutionary congresses.
>
> The masses are entitled at any time to criticise members of the cultural revolutionary groups and committees and delegates elected to the cultural revolutionary congresses.
>
> The aim . . . is to revolutionise people's ideology and as a consequence to achieve greater,

> faster, better and more economical results in all fields of work. . . .
>
> In the great proletarian Cultural Revolution a most important task is to transform the old educational system and the old principles and methods of teaching. In this great Cultural Revolution, the phenomenon of our schools being dominated by bourgeois intellectuals must be completely changed. In every kind of school we must apply thoroughly the policy advanced by Comrade Mao Tse-tung of education serving proletarian politics and education being combined with productive labour, so as to enable those receiving an education to develop morally, intellectually and physically and to become labourers with socialist consciousness and culture.43

The Red Guards

> The young renew the world. . . . The whole of the Chinese revolutionary movement found its origin in the action of young students and intellectuals . . . but they must be united with the broad masses of young workers and peasants . . . otherwise they cannot become a powerful movement. . . . If the young wish to achieve results they must establish friendly relations with adults . . . unite with the majority of the population who are more than twenty-five years old. Old people have experience . . . one cannot neglect them because they are old.44

The call for the rank and file to criticise their leaders, for the people to re-educate the Party into realisation that a reformed Party was necessary for the continued progress of socialism, stamps the Cultural Revolution as a unique event in the history of revolutionary struggles. Another phenomenon was the birth of the Red Guard movement. The part played by the Red Guards — middle school pupils (even some primary school pupils) and higher education students — ensured that literally millions of young people would be intimately involved in the struggle between the two lines.

The first Red Guard group was formed on 29 May, 1966. Under the slogan 'We are the critics of the old world: we are the builders of the new world' the movement snowballed throughout China with massive demonstrations in August in Peking, Shanghai, Tientsin and other major cities. Even in far-off Lhasa hundreds of Red Guards and teachers of the Tibetan Normal School and Lhasa Middle School took to the streets, declaring: 'It was the great Communist Party of China and our great leader Chairman Mao who led us in winning our empancipation and thus we were brought to a happy life.'[45]

Although classes and formal teaching had stopped by mid-1966, schools, colleges and universities stayed open as centres of discussion and political activity. Millions of students from many parts of the country travelled to Peking and other centres to exchange views and argue out policies. In Peking especially demonstrations were of enormous size: between August and November Mao Tse-tung, on a total of eight occasions, reviewed more than eleven million Red Guards in Peking. At the same time Peking students went in groups to bring their experiences to students in other cities.

While this was going on thousands of town students were marching through the countryside helping with farm work and discussing the Cultural Revolution with the peasants, gleaning from them something of the life of the rural people both in the bitter past and at that time. Many went to Yenan and the old revolutionary base areas; these interchanges are vividly described in Myrdal and Kessle, **The Revolution Continued** (Pelican, 1973). While the students — the successors to the proletarian revolution — were learning these lessons from the peasants, the peasants in their turn were receiving their socialist education by learning about the Cultural Revolution, and millions of them began to read Mao's works for the first time.

Intense political activity continued throughout 1967. Roland Berger, who has visited China twice a year since 1953, tells of a visit to Tungchi University, Shanghai, in February 1967:

> The atmosphere in the headquarters of the rebel student groups — of which there were usually several, competing and contending with each other in every institution — was, in a miniature form, very reminiscent of John Reed's description of the Smolny (Leningrad) headquarters of the Bolsheviks in 1917. During the visit I sat with five members of the **East is Red** headquarters group in a corner of a densely smoke-filled room in the university. At various tables groups were at work writing **dazibao** with their black ink brushes or arguing out the politics of a phrase to be included in a new poster. The telephone rang continuously and one or other of the members of the headquarters was called to the phone to receive news of other group activities or to announce the arrival of a student team from Peking or elsewhere or suggesting a visit to a Shanghai factory where the rebel workers wanted student help, or reporting the latest example of skulduggery from the side of the reactionaries.
>
> An editorial group was putting the finishing touches to the **East is Red** group's magazine and passing the finished copy to the students working the offset printing press. Student drivers manning loudspeaker trucks came in to report the completion of a round and to get instructions for the next. In the next room a large group of students were deep in a vivid discussion, criticising the content of their former education and putting forward ideas, at this stage somewhat hazy and at times a little wild, about the education of the future. An English-speaking student relayed the remarks of an architectural student. 'What is the sense', he was saying, 'of one studying plans, as we have been doing, of Notre Dame in Paris or Buddha's temple in London' (which turned out to be St. Paul's Cathedral)? 'What relevance have these structures to the building needs of China today?
>
> Further down the corridor another group was studying **Combat Liberalism** and discussing how far Mao's criticisms had lessons to guide their current behaviour and tactics.
>
> The **East is Red group** claimed to have the support of the majority — 3,000 of the 5,000 — students and many of the teaching staff. Their main contenders were the **Red Flag** group. Later they were to come together in a grand alliance.46

All over China competing rebel groups in schools and universities argued their way through the autumn and winter of 1966 and the spring of 1967, at the same time studying Mao's articles and directives and receiving the down-to-earth reports of their comrades coming back from their Long Marches through the countryside. During this period the great debate around the two lines spread, in the tradition of earlier revolutionary movements, into the factories and the communes.

The treatment of the Red Guard movement by western reporters and writers has resulted in most people completely misunderstanding its role. (As recently as last year, 1972, when I told friends I was going to China, several said, and only half in joke, 'Look out for those Red Guards!'). Western commentators have not only portrayed the Red Guards as anarchistic hooligans, but have interpreted events of 1966 and following years as if the Red Guard student movement was one thing and the struggle of the workers in the factories and the peasants on the communes was another — as if they were totally opposed to each other. There were certainly those in the Liu Shao-chi camp who did their utmost to stir up antagonisms between the three as well as between groups of workers, and the **People's Daily** issued a warning against this as early as 23 August, 1966:

> Those in authority who stubbornly take the capitalist road will inevitably adopt all kinds of methods and means to resist the 16-point decision, suppress the mass movement and sabotage the great Cultural Revolution. In order to shift the targets for attack, besides continuing to incite students to struggle against each other, they have also stirred up a few workers and peasants against the students. . . . Diehards who take the capitalist road have absurdly identified the leadership in their own units with the Party's Central Committee and the entire Party. . . . In some places a small number of workers, peasants and cadres were hoodwinked and deceived and took part in the struggle against the revolutionary students. . . . The broad masses of workers, peasants and soldiers form the main force in the great proletarian cultural revolution and provide powerful backing to the revolutionary students. We must take a firm stand on the side of the revolutionary students and give the warmest and most resolute support to their revolutionary actions. . . . The revolutionary students in their struggles may have certain shortcomings. But we must see that their general direction is correct and we must wholeheartedly support them, help them, and have confidence that in their struggles they will become even more highly steeled and tempered in resolve, even more daring to make revolution and good at making it.47

This confidence was not misplaced. Inevitably, in such a huge mass movement of youth, there were some excesses;* but, as the Cultural Revolution went on, student policy turned increasingly in the direction of alliance with workers and peasants. The first three-in-one alliance, as it was called, of workers, cadres and army men was formed in factories in Shanghai in January 1967 and then spread throughout the country. In educational institutions a similar movement, the formation of alliances of rebel groups which had formerly opposed each other began to take shape.

It was a confused period, made more confusing by the tactics of the Liu Shao-chi faction. In early 1967 the 'capitalist roaders', desperately trying to divert the workers' storm of criticism from themselves, raised students' wages to a high level to make them unpopular among the workers. At the other end of the political spectrum ultra-leftist notions were spread, for instance the 'lineage' theory, which argued that those of 'good' class origin were 'natural' reds, whilst children of the bourgeoisie or landlords were inevitably reactionary —

A hero's son is a real man
A reactionary's son is no damn good.

This was part of a broader ultra-leftist movement directed against cadres and leading Party members — 'oppose all: overthrow all'. And, of course, as youthful leaders of rebel groups gained considerable power and influence, some became dizzy with their new-found authority and began to assume the airs and adopt the methods of the deposed bureaucrats.

The Red Guards themselves saw these dangers; for instance, an article in

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*In some areas the struggle developed into armed battles between groups of students, and between students and workers, in which people were killed. For a graphic account of one such struggle consult **Hundred Days War** by William Hinton — see bibliography.

Red Flag (No. 3, February 1967) by the Third Headquarters of the Peking Red Guards, entitled 'Get rid of Self-Interest', called for an end to erroneous tendencies obstructing the great alliance of revolutionary rebels.

> **Ultra-democracy and liberalism** — with the winning of victory and diminishing pressure from outside, certain organisations and persons have subjectively lowered their demands on themselves and displayed tendencies of ultra-democracy and liberalism. Instead of forming a proper link in the revolutionary ranks, they have become isolated from the revolutionary forces, doing as they like and creating a state of anarchy.
>
> **Seeking the limelight.** Certain persons stretch out their seeking hands. Unable to undertake big things, they won't do small things either. . . . They are keen on work that puts them in the limelight, but categorically refuse to work 'anonymously'.
>
> **The 'mountain-stronghold' mentality.** Some people control a small unit and proclaim themselves its 'rulers'. . . . 'As to forming an alliance, I am the indisputed leader and you have to obey me. Otherwise I will lead my forces to control a mountain-stronghold, blaze a "new road" and show my prowess''. This is the style of the lumpen-proletariat.
>
> **Sectarianism and the 'small-group' mentality.** People with such ideas are narrow-sighted. They see only the small number of their own people, their own small group or section, while losing sight of the revolutionary interests of the 700 million Chinese people and the interests of the world proletarian revolution. They drag one group of people to fight another, and wage unprincipled struggles against those holding different views. This is a slightly magnified individualism.
>
> We are carrying on two revolutions at once: one is to transform the objective world and the other is to transform our subjective world. . . . To seize power in one's mind is a painful process. . . . Integration of intellectuals with the workers and peasants is the only way for intellectuals to overcome their weak points and revolutionise themselves.48

This, and many other such articles, shows the richness of the education the young were giving themselves and each other. The process of struggle-criticism-transformation is also illustrated by the holding of the Congress of Red Guards of Universities and Colleges in Peking in February 1967, bringing into one alliance the revolutionary students of the three different Red Guard headquarters. The Declaration issued by the Congress showed that differences between rival groups of revolutionaries were being resolved, and pointed the way forward:

> We advocate that revolutionaries of all circles first form separate alliances among themselves and then bring about the great unity and alliance of the proletarian revolutionaries of the capital led by the working class and with the workers, peasants and soldiers as the main body.
>
> The idea of excluding all, opposing all and overthrowing all is contrary to Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung's thought.
>
> We the Red Guards, while seizing power from the handful of persons in the party who are in authority and taking the capitalist road, must at the same time carry out the struggle of seizing power in our own minds, to seize the power of 'self-interest', to rebel against it and defeat it.49

From this time revolutionary students and teachers began to go to factories and communes **in a planned and organised way** to integrate themselves with the workers and peasants. This crucially important development was designed to ensure that schooling in all educational institutions would be intimately involved with the lives of working people, with the community as a whole. As the **People's Daily** (4 May, 1967) put it,

> For a young revolutionary, integration with the workers and peasant masses is not a matter of a

day, but a revolutionary orientation which he must follow steadily throughout his life.50

The reopening of the schools

> To carry out the proletarian educational revolution, it is imperative to have the leadership of the working class and its participation, together with the revolutionary three-in-one alliance of the soldiers of the People's Liberation Army, students and teachers, and the activists among the workers who have resolved to carry the proletarian educational revolution through to the end. Workers' propaganda teams should remain at the schools for a long time to share the task of struggle — criticism — transformation and to perpetuate their leadership there. In the countryside, schools are to be run by the most reliable allies of the working class — the poor and lower-middle peasants. **Mao Tse-tung.**51

From March 1967 primary and middle schools began to re-open, and the debate continued in the schools and the communities of which the schools henceforward were to be an integral part. There was no blueprint, no state plan; but instead there were broad directives, broad and general like all Mao's 'instructions', so that the actual curriculum and running of the schools had to be worked out by the three-in-one alliance of workers or peasants, Liberation Army men and teachers and students. Almost echoing Talleyrand's 'War is much too serious a thing to be left to military men', the Chinese were in effect saying that education was too fundamental a process not to be entrusted to the whole community. The workers' propaganda teams which in fact went into schools and universities from about August 1968 to put an end to the bickerings and clashes of rival groups of students and the machinations of the reactionaries were to stay there 'for a long time.'

The participation by the PLA was laid down just as clearly by Mao.

> The PLA should separately and in sessions give military training to university students and children of middle schools and the upper forms of primary schools.They should also take part in the work of re-opening schools, re-adjusting school organisation, setting up leadership bodies of the three-in-one alliance, and carrying out struggle — criticsim — transformation. They should set up experimental points first and then apply the experience so acquired to a wider scope.52

The three-in-one alliance became the basis of the revolutionary committee which formed, and still forms, the leadership of every school, college and university. The preponderance of workers, peasants and PLA men and women ensured that the new educational system would be in line with the interests of the developing socialist economy and that the individualists among the teachers — especially university teachers — would not be able to restore the old system.

Many examples of the ways in which revolutionary committees tackled this task were given in the press. For instance, Tungchi University, Shanghai, established its revolutionary committee in June 1967 and re-opened classes in July. **Dazibao** were put up criticising and repudiating 'the towering crimes of the handful of capitalist roaders . . . and the bourgeois reactionary academic "authorities". Many students paid visits to factories and villages to get the ideas of workers and peasants on transforming education.

It was necessary first to destroy the old system. They quoted Mao:

> There is no construction without destruction. Destruction means criticism and repudiation, it means revolution. It involves reasoning things out, which is construction. Put destruction first, and in the process you have construction.53

Most students and teachers argued that the old educational system had been created on the basis of the systems of exploitation over the past thousands of years. 'It embodied feudal, capitalist and revisionist elements and had a deep-seated social and ideological foundation. Unless the old system was utterly destroyed it would be impossible to establish the new proletarian system.'

Though the bourgeois intellectuals were criticised and repudiated, 'most of the teachers are good or comparatively good and a clear distinction must be drawn between the handful of bourgeois reactionary academic "authorities" and those teachers with bourgeois ideas or bourgeois academic viewpoints. The majority of the teachers should be encouraged to join the struggle and emancipate themselves in the course of it.'

The essential factor 'contributing to the big advances made in the revolutionary criticism and educational revolution at Tungchi University has been the mass drive for a living study of Chairman Mao's works. . . . Following the example of the PLA, the students and teachers now spend two hours a day in studying Chairman Mao's writings and apply what they learn to the criticism and repudiation of the revisionist educational line.'[54]

Teams were sent out from the university in August and September to undertake investigations and study in factories and on construction sites. This resulted in a new and bold proposal for reorganising the university into

> . . . a new institution, a commune. It will consist of a university, a building section and a design centre, thus having a three-fold function — teaching, designing and building. This will change the former separation of education from production. . . . The period of study will be shortened to three years. Apart from courses in Mao Tse-tung's thought and military affairs, the proportion of time given to theoretical subjects will be increased each year.
>
> Productive labour will be arranged for each academic year.
>
> Through keen debates on the programme, the revolutionary teachers and students of Tungchi University have come to see that the commune is a concrete project for implementing Chairman Mao's instructions in engineering institutes. It has the following merits:
>
> 1. Leadership is firmly in the hands of proletarian revolutionaries and the institute will not be dominated, as it was formerly, by bourgeois intellectuals.
> 2. Chairman Mao's policy of education being combined with productive labour will be carried out. This will enrich the content of teaching and study, and promote the struggle for production and scientific experiment.
> 3. Since the content of teaching and study is linked with actual construction projects, it can be trimmed and concentrated, thus changing the phenomenon of the curriculum being overlapping, academic and overburdened with superfluous material.
> 4. It is conducive to the ideological remoulding of intellectuals and to the elimination of the differences between town and country, between worker and peasant, and between mental and manual labour.
>
> The Shanghai municipal revolutionary committee, which attaches great importance to this proposal, has sent people to study it. The committee plans to send teachers and workers of Tungchi University along with members of the East China Institute of Industrial Design to begin working at a construction site along these lines.55

Similar practical applications of Mao's 'instructions' could be seen all over China. Peking No. 31 Middle School debated in 1969 whether it was better for schools to run their own factories or establish direct links with an industrial plant. These particular students decided that the factory's production plan could not be flexible enough to meet the educational needs of the school; moreover the nature of the work was not suitable to enable students to acquire fundamental industrial knowledge. It was better for the school to run its own factory, turning out subcontracted work for a larger factory. And this in fact is what they did: on our visit to the school in April 1972 we saw 15 year-old boys and girls (most of them Red Guards) making the electrical harnesses for a Peking lorry plant, making printed circuits, and processing spare parts for brakes. Workers and technicians from the plant frequently came to the school to lecture on theory and production methods; some were seconded to the school for periods of some months as teachers, thus proving Mao's point that 'every capable person can teach.'

The Kirin Programme

The involvement of millions of peasants and workers in such discussions led to units of production, large and small, formulating plans for the transformation of education in their areas. The plan that received the greatest publicity and support was one put forward by the revolutionary committee of a county in the North East of China. Published in the **People's Daily** of 13 May, 1969, the editorial accompanying it typifies the policy of the government in decentralising, and leaving to the localities the job of translating general suggestions into practical decisions.

> We are publishing the 'programme for primary and middle school education in the rural areas (draft)' worked out by the revolutionary committee of Lishu county, Kirin province, for general discussion. The programme was drafted by the revolutionary committee of the county in co-operation with other departments. We made some modifications after consulting the poor and lower-middle peasants, teachers and students in a number of communes. Some of the differing views are put in brackets. We hope that the poor and lower-middle peasants, revolutionary teachers and students and the People's Liberation Army commanders and fighters supporting agriculture throughout the country as well as the comrades concerned on the revolutionary committees in various provinces, regions and counties will take an active part in this discussion and put forward their suggestions for additions or modifications. This will help us pool the wisdom of the masses, sum up experience and take into consideration the diverse conditions in various localities. We shall be able to improve and enrich the content of the programme and make it more suitable to the actual conditions in various places after it is discussed for some time and revised.

The draft programme consisted of seven chapters, covering every aspect of education. Primary and middle schools in the rural areas were to be managed by the working peasants, the aim being to educate the young people to be 'reliable successors to the cause of the proletarian revolution'; the primacy of political and ideological work was emphasized.

An uninterrupted nine-year system of schooling was recommended, local needs and conditions determining the division into stages. Schools should be local, the old system of examinations should be abolished and with it the practice of pupils repeating a year.

Teachers should be appointed and dismissed by the appropriate revolutionary committees after full discussion by the working peasants. Every effort should be made by selecting new teachers and by educating and 'remoulding' existing teachers, to strengthen their ideological and political understanding.

A simpler curriculum was proposed:

> Five courses are to be given in primary school: politics and language, arithmetic, revolutionary literature and art, military training and physical culture, and productive labour.
>
> Five courses are to be given in middle school: education in Mao Tse-tung thought (including modern Chinese history, contemporary Chinese history and the history of the struggle between the two lines within the Party), basic knowledge for agriculture (including mathematics, physics, chemistry and economic geography), revolutionary literature and art (including language), military training and physical culture (including the study of Chairman Mao's concepts on people's war, strengthening the idea of preparedness against war, and activities in military training and physical culture), and productive labour.
>
> With regard to the importance of the various courses, politics is of primary importance and should be put first in order, relative to productive labour and general knowledge and culture. But in arranging time, more periods should be given to courses in general knowledge and culture. It is appropriate for these courses to account for about 60 per cent of the periods for study in middle school and not less than 70 per cent in primary school.

In this curriculum stress was laid on the combination of theory and practice and on the combination of education with productive labour. (The full text of the Kirin programme is published as an Appendix.)

This very important programme was widely discussed and used as a basis for educational reconstruction. The schools we visited in April 1972 all seem to have taken it as a model. At the beginning of an afternoon's discussion between three of us and 12 teachers and students of Nanxiang People's Commune, in the countryside outside Shanghai, I asked how the Kirin programme had influenced their management of the 8 primary and 13 middle schools in the commune. There ensued three hours of detailed discussion on the subject, entirely without notes on their part.

The report had been very helpful. 'We had scrapped our old policy but were unsure how to proceed.' In place of Kirin's five middle school courses, they had introduced eight — omitting productive labour, as students do this as a matter of course in busy seasons, and adding Chinese language, a foreign language, mathematics and basic knowledge of industry (the Kirin programme included mathematics and Chinese language in the 5 main courses: at Nanxiang they separated them to emphasise their importance).

Their length of schooling was 10 years instead of the 9 proposed by the Kirin programme, probably because of Nanxiang's proximity to the most advanced industrial city in China — which would also explain their emphasis on a foreign language, mathematics and basic knowledge of industry.

The curriculum in city schools is much the same as on the communes, with more emphasis on a foreign language (generally English, which is replacing

Russian as the first foreign language taught) and knowledge of industry. But stress is always laid, in city as in county schools, on the fact that 80 per cent of China's population lives on communes, and that to work and live in a city is certainly not more important or prestigious than to live in the country.

Youth and the countryside

It is absolutely necessary for educated young people to go to the countryside to be re-educated by the poor and lower-middle peasants. **Mao Tse-tung.**56

Everywhere we went in China we saw the slogan **Serve the People.** In schools, colleges and universities, this was interpreted as going to the countryside to serve the people. Optics students at Peking University, asked by us where they would like to go when they were qualified, said that they would like to go whereever they were needed. Peking? Certainly, they liked being in Peking (the three I spoke to were from the country 200 miles or so north west of Peking). Shanghai? Yes, it would be great to work in Shanghai, with its factories, docks and ships. The border regions? Yes, they would be needed there. Back to their own villages? Of course it would be good to return home, if that was where they were needed. They would be given a list of areas needing opticians and would be invited to give their preferences; but their answers seemed genuine and typical — they would be happy to go where their country needed them.

These precepts — serve the people, combine education with productive labour, learn from the poor and lower-middle peasants — ran throughout the schools we visited. Teachers at Peking No. 31 Middle School, in the heart of the city told us how, in addition to one month a year in factories or school workshops, the students spent another month working on a commune.

> Before the Cultural Revolution we used to tell the students what the plants were like and how to plant. But when they went to the country they didn't know what they were or how to plant them — neither did the teachers. We called this 'growing crops on the blackboard'. The peasants criticised them — and us. 'They read many books, but they can't work on a farm — and they don't want to. They look down on labouring people. What class do the students serve?' Now the work is practical, and the workers and peasants teach the students and the teachers.

The articles that follow show how the content of the educational curriculum and the class attitude to the educational process have changed fundamentally since the Cultural Revolution. As far as the implementation of these changes is concerned , we can only report what we saw. It was a tiny sample and one must be wary of generalisations in a country so vast, and with a policy of decentralisation and adaptation to local conditions. The size of China's educational task can perhaps be appreciated by this simple statistic: about 40 per cent of the present population of over 700 million is under 16 years of age.57 The importance of studying education in China is clear, not only because of the part China will undoubtedly play in tomorrow's world, but also comparatively, in view of the educational crisis in many countries today.

Notes

1. SNOW, Edgar. **The Other Side of the River.** Gollancz 1961, p.255. Pelican 1972 p.19 (retitled Red China Today).
2. Descriptions of the Long March, one of the most decisive events in Chinese — perhaps world — history can be found in:-
   SNOW, Edgar. **Red Star Over China.** Gollancz 1937 and Penguin 1972.
   SMEDLEY, Agnes. **The Great Road.** Monthly Review Press 1972.
3. MAO TSE-TUNG. **Selected Works.** Foreign Languages Press, Peking 1967, Vol. 1, pp.53-54.
4. SNOW, Edgar. **Red Star Over China.** op. cit.
5. STEIN, Gunther. **Challenge of Red China.**
6. BELDEN, Jack. **China Shakes the World.** Monthly Review Press 1970, pp.115-116.
7. BELDEN, Jack. op. cit. pp.116-117.
8. FRASER (ed.). **Chinese Communist Education.** Vanderbilt Univ. Press 1965, pp. 75-76.
9. Ibid. p.79.
10. Ibid. pp. 83-84.
11. FITZGERALD, C.P. **Revolution in China.** London, Cresset Press 1952, p.103.
12. **Hsinhua (New China) News Agency,** 13 May, 1966.
13. In June 1955 the Director of Planning of the University of Higher Education reported the translation of over 800 kinds of Soviet teaching materials. The Swedish magazine 'Clarté' reported that up to 1959 a total of 295 million books had been sold and translated (Clarté, Vol. 1 1967). Anyone visiting the bookshop in Peking, even during the height of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, could testify to the enormous number of science books with telltale initials to the apparently Chinese author's name.
   PRICE, R. F. **Education in Communist China.** Routledge & Kegan Paul 1970, pp.102-103.
14. MACFARQUHAR, R. **The Hundred Flowers.** Stevens 1960.
15. **Hsinhua News Agency,** 19 January, 1959.
16. FRASER. op. cit. pp.210, 213.
17. Ibid. op. pp.253-256.
18. PRICE. op. cit. pp. 203-207.
19. RICHMAN, Barry. **Industrial Society in Communist China.** 1969.
20. LEO A. ORLEANS, in **Professional Manpower and Education in Communist China.** Library of Congress, n.d. p.49 gives these statistics of the increase of spare-time and 'illiteracy' students.

	000's
1949	657
1950	1,372
1951	1,375
1952	656
1953	2,954
1954	2,637
1955	3,678
1956	7,434
1957	7,208
1958	40,000

21. **Chronology of the Two-Road Struggle on the Educational Front in the Past Seventeen Years** (Educational Revolution), Peking, 6 May, 1967, Trans. **Chinese Education,** Spring 1968, Vol. 1, No. 1, p.18.
22. **Hsinhua News Agency,** 29 January, 1956.
23. MACFARQUHAR, R. op. cit. pp. 136, 151.
24. MAO TSE-TUNG. **On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People.** Foreign Languages Press, Peking 1960.
25. SNOW, Edgar. **The Other Side of the River.** op cit. p.231.
26. **Education Must be Combined with Productive Labour,** Foreign Languages Press, Peking 1958, Quoted in Fraser op. cit. pp. 293-7.
27. **Peking Review,** 18 August, 1967. p. 19.

28. **Peking Review,** 28 September, 1962. p.5.
29. Decision of Central Committee of CPC on **'Some Problems in Current Rural Work'.** (Draft drawn up by Mao Tse-tung initiating socialist education movement, May 1963.)
30. MILTON, David. **The Urban Review.** May 1972, p.6.
31. **Chronology of the Two-Road Struggle on the Educational Front in the Past Seventeen Years** (Educational Revolution), Peking, May 6, 1967, Trans. **Chinese Education,** Spring 1968, Vol. 1, No. 1, p.37.
32. CH'EN, Jerome (ed.). **Mao Papers.** OUP 1970, pp.21-22.
33. **Peking Review,** 28 May, 1965.
34. MAO TSE-TUNG. **On Contradiction,** Selected Works, Vol. 1. p.336.
35. HINTON, William. **Turning Point in Chine: An Essay on the Cultural Revolution,** chapter 2, Monthly Review Press 1972. For this section I have drawn extensively on pp.23-30.
36. Dazibao — big-character poster — written in large ideographs and posted on a wall for everyone to read.
37. **Jen-min Jih-pao** (People's Daily), 2 June, 1966.
38. A typical criticism was — During the 16 years from 1949 to 1966 our university admitted the children of peasants and workers and in 6 years changed them into perfect bourgeois who only dreamed of making a name for themselves and of obtaining a high salary, and totally forgot that they should, above all else, serve the people. Yuan She-ming, to Alexander Caselle, **Le Monde,** 12 February, 1971.
    Detailed criticism of the policy of Tsinghua University's President can be found in:-
    William Hinton, **Hundred Day War, the Cultural Revolution at Tsinghua University,** Monthly Review Press, 1972.
39. **People's Daily,** 1 January, 1967.
40. **Peking Raview,** 24 June, 1966 gives the full text and nation-wide reactions to the announcement.
41. Full text in **Peking Review,** 24 June, 1966.
42. **Peking Review,** 11 August, 1967 (published on the anniversary of the appearance of the poster).
43. Full text in **Peking Review,** 12 August, 1966.
44. MAO TSE-TUNG, 4 May, 1939 on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the May Fourth, 1919 Movement. Quoted in HAN SUYIN, **China in the Year 2001,** Pelican 1970.
45. **Red Guards Destroy the Old and Establish the New.**
46. From his notes, hitherto unpublished, on the Cultural Revolution.
47. Full text in **Peking Review,** 26 August, 1966.
48. Full text in **Peking Review,** 10 February, 1967.
49. **Peking Review,** 10 March, 1967.
50. **Peking Review,** 12 May, 1967.
51. **People's Daily,** 27 August, 1968 — (quoted in CH'EN, Jerome, op. cit. p.155).
52. **People's Daily,** 7 March, 1967, quoted in CH'EN, Jerome op. cit. p.136.
53. **Hsinhua News Agency,** 31 October, 1967.
54. **Hsinhua News Agency,** 31 October, 1967.
55. **Hsinhua News Agency,** 31 October, 1987.
56. **People's Daily,** 22 December, 1968, quoted in CH'EN, Jerome, op. cit. p.157.
57. GITTINGS, John. **The Guardian,** 3 April, 1973.

Kindergartens

Sylvia Mauger

Before 1949 facilities in China for pre-school education were virtually non-existent, and children had to be cared for within a family which often did not know where the next meal was coming from. Since then, kindergarten provision has expanded rapidly. Today it is available to the majority of children in towns and cities and increasingly, although as yet on a much smaller scale, for children on the rural people's communes.

Most factories of any size make provision for pre-school education for the children of mothers working in the plant and for others facilities are organised by neighbourhood committees. There is some provision for full boarding and rather more for children staying at the kindergarten during the week and returning home at the week-ends and holidays. But the majority are taken to kindergarten by their parents each day.

While kindergartens are not yet available for every pre-school child, and concern is expressed at the shortage, a far larger proportion of Chinese children attend school from the age of two-and-a-half than in our society. Priority for enrolment is given to the children of workers, peasants and soldiers whose hours of work make it difficult for them to look after their families during the week.

Pre-school, no less than older children, take part in China's social transformation, and the kindergarten sets the tone for a collective approach to life, against egoism and élitism. Kindergarten education is specifically designed to encourage devotion to the people; in other words, the principle that everyone receiving education should be enabled to develop morally, intellectually and physically and become a worker with socialist consciousness and culture is reflected in the educational process from the earliest age.

Throughout our three-week tour of China we were consistently given four chief educational aims. These were:

1. To allow every child to develop morally, physically and intellectually.
2. To instil in all children a sincere wish to serve the people.
3. To educate all children to be true successors of the proletariat.
4. To encourage all children to support international revolutionary movements.

All these aims, which inter-relate and support each other, were followed in the educational institutions we visited, including the kindergartens.

Let us start with the first three-fold aim. The easiest to identify clearly is physical development. A high standard of physical fitness is maintained by regular, daily, drill-type exercise by everyone in schools, colleges and factories. In addition to this routine activity, we saw children in kindergartens playing organised games such as miniature basket-ball and table-tennis. Team relay races seemed designed more for physical development than individual competitiveness. About two or even three hours each day seem to be set aside for both free and organised activities in the playground, and judging by the high standard of the performances we were given, a great deal of time is also given to singing and dancing. The content of songs and the themes of dances and playlets are concerned with the lives of workers, peasants and soldiers, and solidarity with liberation movements, thus combining political education with the development of language and co-ordination.

Another important part of the children's physical development is closely linked with their intellectual and moral training. This relates to the productive labour in which all children engage from their earliest days at school and which introduces them to agricultural and industrial work. At the kindergarten we visited in Canton, not only did the children help produce some of the vegetables for their own meals on the school's small farming plot, but also spent 20 minutes every week in 'industrial labour'. This involved small groups of children bending little boxes into shape, opening small plastic bags, or trimming — with very blunt scissors — plastic toothpaste caps. They worked meticulously, with pride in the knowledge that their goods were being sent to a local factory.

Ruth Sidel **(Women and Child Care in China, 1972)** records a typical day at the Beihai (twenty-four hour) kindergarten, Peking:

7.00 a.m.	Get up. Children dress themselves, fold quilt. Morning exercises, clean bedroom and classroom, wash
8.00 a.m.	Breakfast
8.30— 9.00 a.m.	Free time
9.00 a.m.	Classes: junior middle group, only one class; middle and older group, two classes
10.00 a.m.	Exercises, walk along the river
11.45—12.30	Lunch
1.00— 3.00 p.m.	Nap in the summer
1.00— 2.30 p.m.	Nap in the winter
After nap	Snack, fruit and a sweet
3.00 p.m.	Class for middle and senior groups. Stories, exercises, and practising performances
4.00— 5.30 p.m.	Outdoors — free play
6.00 p.m.	Supper — wash, a bath (summer)
7.00 p.m.	Television or lantern slides or outdoors for a walk
8.00 p.m.	Bedtime in winter
9.00 p.m.	Bedtime in summer

At this full time kindergarten 390 children, ages 3½ to 7, were divided into 15 classes each of which had 3 teachers. This kindergarten had a ratio of one teacher to every 8 children. In twelve-hours-a-day kindergartens the ratio was one teacher to every 13 or 15 children.

The playground at the Beihai kindergarten was equipped with swings, two jungle gyms, three slides, a see-saw, a sand pit and several benches.

A certain amount of a kindergarten's time table is devoted to formal teaching, and by the time the children go to junior middle school at about seven they are expected to know about 50 characters, to be able to write a little, to do simple addition up to 10 and to be able to draw and colour simple objects fairly accurately. In that the syllabus is directly related to everyday life and childhood experience it bears some resemblance to that in the best British kindergartens, but with an important difference. In China it is assumed, even at this early age, that children can be interested in political questions suitably presented, and the social environment to which the syllabus is related is based on service to the people and not everyone for himself. The questions in the arithmetic lesson were related to the work of a local commune and the Chinese lesson, illustrated on a daylight screen, concerned the life of a hero of the Eighth Route Army.

Moral education is implicit in the political content of all lessons and activities. The **Three Constantly Read Articles (Serve the People; In Memory of Norman Bethune; The Foolish Old Man)** are used — even in kindergartens — to teach devotion to the people without thinking of self. The clearest example we saw of this was in the Canton kindergarten's Chinese lesson in which the teacher was telling a story using a series of pictures on the board. These showed a boy and a girl returning from school with their books and then sitting on a bench to read. They see an old woman a long way off who has fallen and dropped her basket of apples. They leave their books and run off to help her but, as they do so, it starts to rain and they worry that their books are getting wet. On returning to the bench, however, they find a 'little red soldier' sitting next to their books and holding an umbrella over them to keep them dry. What is the story about? asked the teacher. The children helped the old woman with no thought for themselves and the 'little red soldier' helped the children, replied the pupils. The teacher then asked if anyone in the class knew of a similar situation and, one by one, the children rose and told of some way in which they were helped by others in the class, for example, staying behind to help with homework.

A simlar instance is recounted by Ruth Sidel. After telling the story of Norman Bethune, the Canadian surgeon who died from blood poisoning whilst serving with the Chinese army in the War of Resistance against Japan, the teacher asks the children what they had learned.

> The teacher could not call on the children as quickly as they wanted to speak. At the very end she asked, 'If you were to find a child sick on the street, what would you do?' The child's response: 'I would get medicine for him and water for him'. We were interested that the child did not say he would go find a doctor or his mother.

International solidarity is equally stressed. Ruth Sidel records that on her visit to the Beihai kindergarten, Peking.

> A group of five-year-olds came dancing into a large, bare, sunlit room singing 'I have a coloured pencil' and 'with a red pencil I will draw a red flag and with a black pencil I will draw a map of Africa.'

Although it is obviously an ambitious aim to teach proletarian internationalism to children between three and seven years old, the Chinese kindergartens seemed to have made a start. Their pupils performed many songs and dances to celebrate the popular struggles of other countries. Their reading books carried stories of Korean or Vietnamese children. The spirit in which the Chinese youngsters welcomed us as 'Foreign aunties and uncles' could not have been more happy and sincere. Considering the history of European and US involvement in China this is no mean achievement.

The importance of self-reliance and selflessness appeared to be cultivated consciously at all times and at all levels, and even the five to seven year olds would know through their political study about, for example, the people of Tachai (a model commune brigade) and the value of their example to the Chinese people.

Productive labour, self-reliance and devotion to the people have all been brought into sharper focus by the Cultural Revolution. Teachers and members of Revolutionary Committees of all the schools we visited explained how the content and aim of education had been changed. Before the Cultural Revolution the intake of most schools tended to favour the sons and daughters of cadres, but now priority is given to the children of peasants, workers and the People's Liberation Army.

During the Cultural Revolution while the schools were closed, the teachers discussed their aims and methods with local workers and peasants. Workers are represented on the Revolutionary Committees and they also contribute to lessons by telling their own experiences of the 'bitter past' and by giving practical instruction to the children engaged in productive labour.

Before the Cultural Revolution, one member of a kindergarten's Revolutionary Committee told us. we simply minded the children and taught them how to dress themselves neatly and how to eat properly together with the rudiments of the three Rs.

During the Cultural Revolution the teachers had gone through a period of 'struggle-criticism-transformation' and many of them spent a period doing factory or farm work with the result that they are now able to acquaint the children in simple terms with the rudiments of industry and agriculture. Frequent visits to communes and factories are essential parts of the curriculum.

Ruth Sidel, who has worked in the United States for some years with emotionally disturbed pre-school children and has been a social work supervisor at a comprehensive child care project, comments:

> . . . one of the most striking aspects of the teaching of pre-school children in China is that the values, ideas, and premises of the larger society are handed down to them **in toto,** without diluting or sugar-coating. Children are considered citizens today as well as in the future, and this is a time of preparation for their role as full-fledged citizens when they are older students, teenagers, and adults.

Primary Schools

William Edmonds

Primary education, like all other spheres of life in China, must be understood through politics. At a time of great experiment and in a country of contrasting local conditions, schools may differ widely, yet, with politics as their 'commander and soul', there is no doubt that they are united in a common dynamic purpose. For it must be remembered that it is the political revolution that made possible the extraordinary expansion of primary education, with the result that virtually every adult under the age of forty is now literate. The achievement of national educational programmes may all too readily be measured by levels of literacy; in China, though, the achievement must also be seen in terms of political involvement. A Chinese primary school, in particular, can only be seen as an integral part of a politically conscious society.

In April 1972, we were fortunate in visiting an outstanding example of an integrated primary school. On our visit to Chen Hsien Chia School, in an urban neighbourhood of Nanking, we met not only teachers and children but also parents and local workers. It was here, both from observation and discussion, that we became fully aware of education as the shared responsibility of family, school and society. We saw that it was as natural for workers and peasants to come in and help in the school as it was for children and teachers to go out and help in the fields and factories. The school's revolutionary committee fostered close contact with its community. The chairman of this committee was a former lathe operator at a local factory, the vice-chairman was one of the teachers and the other three members were all local representatives. Their deep concern for the children's education was evident, especially in regard to the aims of serving proletarian politics and 'combining with productive labour'. They seemed determined to rectify any suggestion of learning for 'fame and gain', as was apparently more prevalent before the Cultural Revolution. As one father pointed out, when pressed about ambitions for his daughter, 'children are not the private property of parents but the wealth of the state'.

Of the 1,000 or so children who come to this school, all live within five minutes walking distance. They enrol at about the age of six and a half, and most of them have previously gone to kindergarten. Once in the primary school, each year's intake is grouped in classes according to the streets where the children live, so that there is easy contact with homes. This fosters a close home-school relationship. Mothers told us how much they appreciated the change which is one result of the Cultural Revolution, and they no longer have to peer through the windows to see how their children are getting on but can come in and talk freely with the teachers. In each street after-school study classes were also organised with the joint participation of parents, teachers and children.

At Chen Hsien Chia School, in line with a general policy, the courses are in the process of being reduced from six to five years. Within this time, though, there is a formidable time-table and curriculum to be followed. Even if political education does not occupy much time as a subject (only two periods a week in the fourth year) it reflects strongly in every activity in and out of school. It ensures the very quality of learning, based on co-operative enterprise, on continually relating to practice, and on the supremely effective motivation of 'serving the people'.

	SUMMER TIMETABLE
7.45	roll call and ideological work
8.05	morning exercises
8.40	lesson
9.25	break
9.35	lesson
10.20	break
10.30	lesson
11.15	home for lunch and sleep
14.00	lesson
14.45	break
14.55	lesson
15.40	lessons finish

CURRICULUM OF 4TH GRADE
Politics — 2 periods per week
Chinese lang. — 11 periods per week
Mathematics — 6 periods per week
Physical ed. — 2 periods per week
Music — 1 period per week
Painting — 1 period per week
General Know. — 2 periods per week
Agricultural work — 1 week a term
Industrial work — 1 week a term

For everybody at Chen Hsien Chia School putting politics in command means relating theory with practice. This is immediately realised by the great importance attached to productive labour. The school workshops produce parts to be used in the Wanking Lorry Repair and Maintenance Plant and during each term the children in turn spend a whole week working either in the factory or in the school workshops. They also spend another week working on a nearby commune or in the school vegetable garden. The children spend a whole week at whatever task they are set to do, and so learn to appreciate normal working conditions. Some of the jobs in the workshops are skilled and sophisticated; air filters are constructed, oil filters are electro-plated using acid baths and stop-treads for buses are filed into shape. As one of the workers said the purpose is basic, 'we must teach the children to cherish physical labour and not mind getting their hands oily'.

Learning the Chinese script, it is often claimed, takes a good two years longer than learning an alphabetic written language. At this school about half of the normal timetable is taken up with this subject and by the time the children leave they are expected to have mastered some 2,500 characters, the minimum necessary for basic literacy. In addition to this at the beginning of the course the children learn the 'pinyin' romanisation so that they have a phonetic code to help them with pronunciation. In the first year alone, the children are supposed to learn 700 characters together with a grounding in 'pinyin'. For us it was remarkable that there didn't appear to be any problem of reading backwardness; it was claimed that the absolute minimum of characters mastered by any child in the first year is 300. Teachers said that they give extra help to children with difficulties, sometimes in school after the lessons and sometimes at home, but more often they encourage the children to help each other. The outstanding success of this learning is a testimony to the motivation.

In this school they are also particularly proud of their mathematics syllabus. The abacus had recently been introduced in the first year whereas before it had been limited to the fourth year and above. The children's ability to calculate had improved significantly. It is interesting that this innovation had come about because one of the teachers had seen its success on a visit to another school in Tientsin.

Aspects of the curriculum that might encourage individual expression, so much valued in British schools, are generally approached with more inhibition. In writing, objectivity and analytic skill are the qualities most aimed for, and in painting, emphasis is on exact representation. Traditional calligraphy using brush and ink is still practised, but probably not to the extent of earlier times. In music, however, there is no doubt that the children have an opportunity to express their feelings.

A performance of their songs and dances is a most moving occasion; a display of versatility, especially in the playing of traditional Chinese instruments, is combined with a most forceful expression of goodwill and political commitment. Many of their songs and dances are those of the minority nationalities. Cultural activities are not limited to the school; within the organisations of the 'Little Red Soldiers' groups and the children's palaces much extra scope is given for a whole range of activity, including especially music, art and craft work.

Classroom study is an earnest and concentrated occupation. With 50 children packed tightly into each room, and with a minimal supply of books and equipment, it is inevitable that lessons are somewhat formal in style. Within this context, opportunities for student initiative in the curriculum, or even for much practical learning through discovery and investigation, are therefore limited. Yet, behind the formality, which is by no means rigid, there is evidence of an extraordinarily relaxed relationship between teachers and children, whose criticism and suggestions are encouraged.

It is stressed that the tests, which still take place regularly each term, are used to measure both teaching and learning. They include open-book examinations, which test ability to analyse and closed-book examinations, which are more of a memory test. The results are included in the children's end of term reports but, in these, the most important part is each child's self-criticism and the comments by his classmates. It is rare for children to jump or repeat a year and they are never ranked according to ability or achievement. What is important is the collective effort of all the children, teachers and others all helping each other. After all, as we were reminded, they are not engaged in the revolution of the few but in the revolution of the masses.

Middle schools

Roland Berger

As soon as we are born the world gets to work on us and transforms us from merely biological into social units. Every human being at every stage of history or pre-history is born into a society and from his earliest years is moulded by that society. (E. H. Carr **What is History?**)

In China this moulding process, because of the character of education prior to the Cultural Revolution, was at variance with and, in many respects, antagonistic to the political and social objectives prescribed for China's development when the country was liberated in 1949.

The impact of this negative influence was likely to affect particularly students in the age-range 13-19, passing through the then six-year middle school education. The sabotaging of part-work, part-study schooling, the setting up of middle schools for those of 'special talent', in fact the whole élitist approach before 1966, clearly nurtured tendencies highly inimical to the future of a socialist China. The students were out of touch on three counts: out of touch with production, out of touch with politics, and out of touch with the workers.

The schools re-open

After the 'Red Guard phase' of mid-1966 and the Long Marches to the countryside, middle schools began to re-open in the spring of 1967.

'Now is the time', commented an editorial in **People's Daily** (7 March 1967) 'for the revolutionary pupils and teachers to return to the schools and to seize for the proletariat the positions in the primary and secondary schools'. The editorial warned that 'all must see to it that the spearhead of struggle is never directed against the pupils.'

A main objective was 'to strengthen the students' sense of organisation and discipline'. Teams of armymen were attached to the schools to help teachers and students to settle down and bring about 'great alliance'. The main emphasis, in this first period, was on physical and military training, the study of Mao Tse-tung's three popular articles, (see p.39) with special attention to 'Serve the People' and reform of basic scholastic subjects.

The schools continued along these lines during 1967 and early 1968 against a background of intense class struggle throughout the country. Apart from the radically new relationship between students and teachers brought about by discussion, criticism and proposals for constructive reforms of the curriculum, two other significant changes were introduced. Schools for 'specially talented' children were abolished in favour of schools for all youngsters in the neighbourhood, and any single-sex schools, of which there had been quite a number, became co-educational.

As the middle schools got down to work, a new form of management grew out of the earlier 'great alliance' — the revolutionary committee composed of teachers, students, cadres and armymen. The practice was introduced whereby every city middle school class spent a period of the school year studying and working in the countryside and in factories.

Later, Communist Party committees were re-established after clearing out some of the old blood and bringing in new. Today, these committees give political leadership in each school, with the revolutionary committee responsible for carrying out policy.

Integration with the working class

The emphasis on the crucial importance of students and other intellectuals integrating themselves with the workers and peasants took formal shape from August, 1968 with the enunciation of the principle that 'the working class must exercise leadership over everything'. I visited Middle School No. 23 in Peking on 8 November, 1968, three weeks after a team of forty workers from Metal Cutting Factory No. 3 had entered the school. A teacher explained that, although a revolutionary committee had been formed in April, 1967 the conviction had been growing that, because of the strong bourgeois influence inherited from the past, the students and teachers left to themselves were not likely to solve the problems of transforming education to serve the needs of a socialist state.

The participation of the workers is now a regular feature of leadership in all educational institutions in urban areas of China. In rural areas the peasants carry out a similar function. In middle schools I have visited in recent years the size of the workers' teams has been somewhat reduced to around 10 to 15 and there has been some turnround of personnel as, after a period, workers return to work in the factory and are replaced by others. At the same time, it has become the practice for the factory providing the workers' team also to arrange the students' work-study programme in the factory and generally to maintain close links with the school. The schools may be said to have two forms of supervision: by the Cultural and Educational Office of the Revolutionary Committee of the municipality or province, and by the factory.

The main function of the workers' teams is to assist teachers and students in the transformation of education. Members of the team serve on the revolutionary committee to ensure that school policy is oriented in a socialist direction. The workers are in everyday contact with teachers and students, giving advice on the content of lessons, text books, examinations, and so forth. Workers take classes in certain subjects such as physics, mechanics and foundations of industry, and show special concern for the running of the workshops which are a feature of all middle schools. Teachers and students comment on the pronounced influence of the workers on an economical and direct style of work and their patient attention to 'problem cases' among the students.

In the countryside, middle schools, which before the Cultural Revolution were run by the county, are now directly under the supervision of the people's commune, usually of the production brigades. Peasants serve on the school's revolutionary committee, take classes on rural history, the foundations of agriculture (which embraces aspects of geology, biology and chemistry through such practical matters as seed selection, soil chemistry, fertiliser production, soil erosion and water control). They also supervise the physical labour on the communes in which all middle school children take part. Students in the rural areas who once looked to education as a way of 'saying goodbye to the village and the hoe' are re-thinking their attitude under the guidance of the peasants.

Length of school life

The question of the appropriate length of school life has been much discussed in the debates on the transformation of education which followed Mao Tse-tung's May 7, 1966 Directive with its injunction that 'the period of schooling should be shortened'. Before the Cultural Revolution the system provided six years of primary and six years of middle school education, so that students who passed through both junior and senior middle school were 19 when they had completed their secondary education.

Today, students enter junior middle school at 12 to 13. A number of variants has been tried out since 1967, starting with two or three years combined middle school education. This was followed by a trial in some places of two years junior and two years senior middle school. This system is now operating in the rural areas where junior middle schooling is apparently available for about three-quarters of those finishing primary school followed by two years senior middle school for perhaps 50 per cent of students from junior middle schools. In some towns, Kwangchow is one example, I found in spring, 1973 a number of cases where a period of three years junior and two years senior middle school was in operation. Probably about 90 per cent of town children are now receiving junior middle school education. The percentage of those continuing for a further two years of senior middle school seems to vary from about 50 to 75, according to local conditions.

The Budget Bureau of the Ministry of Finance informed me in April, 1973 that the number of pupils in primary and middle schools had increased by 30 per cent since 1965. It can be assumed that more than half of these are middle school places.

The school year is divided roughly into 70 per cent for study and 30 per cent physical labour (or learning from the workers and peasants, as the Chinese describe it). Middle schools operate six days a week. Some have six periods of 50 minutes each, some seven of 45 minutes.

Curriculum

There has been much experimenting with the content of education. Today, the curriculum in most middle schools seems to take the following shape:

Chinese language and literature (normally five sessions a week)
Mathematics (five sessions)

Politics (three sessions plus current affairs discussions)
Physics/Chemistry (in some schools the two subjects are taken together as 'foundation of industry')
History
Geography
Second language (generally English, with Russian as well in some schools)
Culture (art, music, etc.)
Physical training
Foundations of agriculture
Hygiene or physiology are included in some, but not all, curricula

One school visited was taking biology as a separate subject. Most would include it in foundations of agriculture.

The influence of the workers' teams has had a salutary effect on the content of many of the subjects, particularly in getting away from 'learning what you cannot apply'. The theme of integrating with the workers and peasants and striving to 'serve the people' not only of China but of the whole world runs through most subjects.

English text books in use in Kwangtung Province, for example, have the following chapters:

Learn from the workers and peasants ('The workers are our good teachers. We must learn from them')

Our class ('We all love and help each other. We are like brothers and sisters')

Serve the people

Our Good Teachers ('Sometimes we go to work in people's communes. We work in the fields together with the poor and lower-middle peasants. They teach us how to do farm work. . . . In the evening we visit the poor and lower-middle peasants. They give us lessons in class struggle . . .')

Master Wang (story of a veteran worker: 'He applies theory to practice. . . . He takes good care of the machines and does his best to improve his work. He cares much for others. He is always ready to help the young workers . . .')

We build socialism with our own hands

Chang Hua at school (questions and answers: 'Does he care much for others? Yes, he does. He is always ready to help his classmates. Does he like sport? Yes, he does. He likes sport very much.')

The study of politics takes two forms. About three sessions a week are devoted to basic political theory and at least two to current affairs. In the junior middle schools Mao Tse-tung's three popular articles and extracts from his other articles are discussed. The senior middle schools study **On Contradiction** and **On Practice** as well as sections of the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin. Current affairs classes seem to range widely across the international scene with some emphasis on the third world and liberation movements. Many of the classes in politics and current affairs are conducted by the students themselves, with teachers or members of the workers' team available for consultation.

In May, 1969 I sat in on a second year mathematics class at the junior middle school on the Marco Polo Commune, near Peking. A question of ratios dealt with the apportionment of a contingent of 120 armymen which had been sent to help two production brigades with their harvests. The problem posed was how the 120 should be divided between the two brigades which had different needs.

The next question was concerned with wage differentials in the Soviet Union. The proportion of high to low wages was given as 325:3, and the wages of a professor as 6,500 roubles per annum. 'What', the teacher asked, 'would be the wage of a worker?' Before getting down to working out the calculation, the teacher asked 'What do you think of the question' and there ensued a lively discussion among the students of material incentives, piece rates, privilege and the lessons China should draw from developments in the Soviet Union. The students quoted freely from the **Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung** which each had beside him on the desk. 'Good', said the teacher, 'We have the political orientation clear but it's also important to work out the figures correctly. An incorrect calculation will only waste time.'

A student volunteered to come to the blackboard to work out the answer. He stuck at a certain point and hesitated in his calculations, scratching his head. A good humoured chorus came from the whole class 'Be resolute, fear no sacrifice and surmount every difficulty'. And the teacher chipped in, 'Because we are serving the people, we are not afraid of making mistakes'. Encouraged, or perhaps challenged, the lad went on to finish the sum and, indeed, came out with the correct answer.

Concern for the world's people figures largely in many lessons. (A map of the world is displayed on the wall of most classrooms alongside a map of China). During an English class at Lu Hsün Middle School, Nanking, which I visited in April, 1973 the teacher announced, 'Let's have a chat'. A boy and a girl came to the front of the room and carried on a dialogue in English:

'How do you do?'
'How do you do?'
'Where are you from?'
'I'm from Africa.'
'Welcome to China. China is a developing country and part of the third world.'

The exchange continued along the lines that developing countries should help each other, that China had had some successes and should help liberation movements but that she still was a poor country and had a long way to go, and so forth.

Work-study

The students' participation in physical labour and work-study takes a variety of forms at the middle school stage. Each school has its own workshop or small factory which is by no means just a handicraft venture; production is for use, normally for a local factory. The students spend at least a half-day each week in the workshop with teachers and some of the members of the workers' team and there seems to be a free-and-easy arrangement for other workers from the factory to come in for a day or two to give instruction on a particular technique or piece of equipment.

Most middle schools combine work-study in the school workshop with sessions at a regular factory (usually that from which the workers' team has been drawn). Each method, they say, has its advantages. In the factory it is easier for the students to learn from the working class who open their eyes to the realities of society and industry. But the big machines cannot be stopped and production halted. Here the school's own workshop has the advantage since with their own machines the teachers can strip them down to give explanations of working parts and there is time to go into production methods more fully, as well as to demonstrate the use of callipers, micrometers, and so forth. And, since these factory workshops have in many cases been set up either by adapting old and redundant machinery or by the students making the machine themselves (therefore without cost to the state), the students receive a useful lesson in self-reliance and in converting the equipment to their specific requirements. 'This', say the Chinese, 'is our method of walking on two legs.'

The items produced in school workshops depend to a large extent on the requirements of local factories. They range from diodes, batteries, parts for radios, cabling for trucks, printed circuits, tractor parts to medicines from herbs, and haversacks. The state provides the raw materials. The schools are paid for what they produce after deducting cost of materials, and this income is added to the school fund and is used, among other things, for the purchase of new equipment.

Physical labour in the countryside for students from urban middle schools centres on the 'branch school', in most cases sited on an area of waste land on which teachers and students build their own living accommodation and classrooms. The size of the plots vary from 25 to 50 acres. To take one example, a Kwangchow middle school with 26 acres grows rice, sugar cane, some vegetables and fruit, raises poultry, runs a small weather forecasting unit and a small hydro-electric station, as well as a workshop for making medicines from local herbs.

The division of school time between work and study varies and depends on seasonal factors. Normally three days of the week are devoted to study and three to labour, although many sessions obviously combine the two. Teachers work alongside the students.

While living for the most part in their own quarters contact with the local community is close. In the evenings the peasants and town students get together and exchange experiences. Lessons include writing the history of the village and biographies of the peasants. In the busy seasons the students work with peasants in the fields. Mathematics includes questions on the practices of landlords and moneylenders (rent, interest and taxes) in the past and the accounting and book-keeping methods of the production brigades and teams today. Many town schools branch out into more ambitious ventures. A 'Learn Agriculture' group of the Wusung Middle School, Shanghai, learned of a bacterial insecticide to kill rice borers. The need was great and production limited. The students consulted workers and technicians and then set themselves the task to produce the bacilli. One made a thermostat from a soap box with two bulbs and another converted a steam cooker into a high-pressure steriliser. Eventually they succeeded in trial-producing the bacilli which, when examined by the official Testing Bureau, came up to the prescribed standard. To popularise this simple and inexpensive equipment the students received over thirty study groups of poor peasants from a number of provinces, a venture which could have had only beneficial effects on the gaps between the generations and between town and country dwellers.

An evaluation of the policy of students working in the countryside has come from a somewhat unexpected quarter. Mgr Silvio Luoni, delegate of the Vatican at the International Labour Conference in Geneva, on 15 June, 1973 made this observation:

> The periodical visits to the countryside of the young students is not only a method of increasing production but is, above all, preserving the links of the new generation with the deepest roots of a culture justly regarded as among the most prestigious in the history of humanity. (reported in **Le Monde**, 16 June, 1973).

Text Books

All text books have been edited and their contents radically changed since the Cultural Revolution. The workers' teams have played a large part in bringing the material down to earth; to pose problems and present concepts which are meaningful for the students within the context of their everyday experiences and their future work.

Although the basic principles are common, there is no uniformity in text books throughout the country, each province or municipality producing its own range. All are still regarded as only provisional.

Attitude to students

For students with special difficulties a variety of methods is tried. Frequently a student lagging in one subject will be linked to work together with an 'advanced' student to form a 'red pair', or the pair may consist of a teacher and a student. For cases involving discipline of one kind or another, a heart-to-heart talk with one of the workers' team will often help. Chinese teachers explain that when such problems arise the focus is on the error not the person. The Chinese certainly seem to have the capacity to objectify issues of this sort, to turn to the study of a broader question, of which the error may be an expression, and thus to avoid a situation in which the personal issue predominates. The type of sanctions against students resorted to in the west, and often applied by the old intellectuals in China before the Cultural Revolution, are not practised in China today. There is open condemnation of old style teaching methods and Lenin's stricture on capitalist education designed for 'the training of docile and efficient servants of the bourgeoisie' is frequently quoted. Help to the students is not a one-way process. Students are equally expected to help teachers with their problems, personal or otherwise.

Most middle schools have a system of twice-yearly 'rectification movements' during which students, workers, teachers and cadres review the work of the school as a whole and in particular. Free and frank criticism and discussion is the order of the day. Whilst some formality, a hang-over from Chinese traditional education, with the addition of other influences mentioned earlier in this booklet, persists, particularly in the class room, it seems evident that overall the student-teacher relationship is one of equality and mutual respect. When questioned on this point, the Chinese agree that there is still much to be changed. They state, however, that the extra-classroom activities such as factory and farm work, the close contact with the workers and the community are likely to be the major factor in breaking down the formalistic features inherited from the past.

Although equality of the sexes is a basic tenet of Chinese policy and is written into the Constitution, the roles of boys and girls tend still to be seen in traditional terms. I cannot say that I have ever seen girls and boys playing football together or found boys joining in a skipping game with the girls. But serious efforts are continuously made to break down the differences. In the school workshops I have seen boys working away quite unselfconsciously at sewing machines as well as learning to sew and darn, while girls operate machinery alongside the lads. Girls will be seen drilling a team of militia students, mostly boys.

Contrary to the assumption of many western commentators, the Red Guards have not disappeared or been disbanded. Every middle school has its Red Guard organisation in which anything from thirty to seventy per cent of the studentship is enrolled. The Red Guards are the activists leading the field when jobs of social benefit or community service are to be tackled. The Communist Youth League (minimum age 15) was re-formed following the Ninth Party Congress in April, 1969. This is an organisation considerably smaller in numbers than the Red Guards (ranging from seven to 15 per cent from one middle school to another) to which the more politically developed students belong. Municipal and Provincial Congresses of Red Guards are held from time to time and already several assemblies of Youth League members have been held at the provincial and municipal levels.

School and community

The school's relationship with the community is described as a three-way combination — society, school and family. In many city districts area groups for educational reform composed of workers, teachers, parents and members of neighbourhood committees meet regularly to exchange views and suggest ways of improving methods.

Community service is a regular feature of school activity in which all students, not only the Red Guards, participate. In some towns students are organised into units of 10 to fetch water for old people or to help them clean their homes. In others, students post themselves at railway stations and main highways to lend a hand to anyone needing help. In some cities students assist with traffic control, with loud hailers at busy intersections or lining the streets to keep cyclists within their lanes.

Teachers

Changing the outlook and teaching methods of those who grew up in the old system or were trained by the old intellectuals in the period before the Cultural Revolution is clearly a long and not at all easy process. 'In the transformation of education', stated the Kirin Programme, 'it is the teachers who are the main problem.'

Even those whose political orientation may have improved may yet lack the experience to introduce the practical alongside the theoretical in their teaching. Help given by the workers' teams is obviously beneficial as is the experience of working with students in factories and on communes. Where possible, teachers spend a period of time — three months every two years in some schools — working on a commune or in a factory but, with a shortage of teachers, it is not easy to apply this practice in all schools.

Teachers study the writings on education of Marx, Lenin and Mao Tse-tung and, as negative example, those of Kairov and other Soviet educationists. There appears to be a lively exchange between teachers and schools on the content and methodology of education through local seminars and cross visits between schools. A journal, specialising in educational reforms, carries discussion papers, reports of seminars and publishes accounts of what are thought to be the best examples of successful experiments and innovations.

After the middle school

When students leave at the end of the junior or senior middle school education, the vast majority go to work in the countryside, the border regions or in factories. In one Peking middle school which I visited in November, 1968, 200 students who had left school in the past year were working in Heilungkiang, Tibet and Inner Mongolia. A very small percentage of students leaves senior middle school and directly enters teachers' training colleges and foreign language institutes; presumably a temporary measure to meet the acute shortage of teachers, translators and interpreters. The method of selection for higher education is described in a later section.

Shortcomings

At every turn the Chinese emphasise that education is still very much in the experimental stage and they are not sparing in their criticisms of present weaknesses. Classes of fifty, they say, are too large although unavoidable for the moment. The visitor is often told that equipment is inadequate although many of the middle schools I have seen had excellently equipped physics and chemistry laboratories, and in some town schools facilities for indoor and outdoor games were positively lavish by our standards.

One is informed in some schools that the level of teaching is still too low and that many of the students, probably because of ultra-left inclinations, have a tendency to despise study and over-emphasise practice.

Further attention to formalistic methods of teaching will certainly be necessary before this negative feature of traditional Chinese education, so far from Mao Tse-tung's conception of the educational process, is eradicated.

Visiting China over many years leaves one with the strong impression that, whatever the imperfections, a system of secondary education is being forged which will give the student the maximum opportunity 'to develop morally, intellectually and physically and become a worker with both socialist consciousness and culture.'

In this area China, it seems, is reaching towards a condition which Milton, three centuries ago and in circumstances vastly different, described as: ' a better Education, in extent and comprehension more large and yet of time far shorter, and of attainment far more certain, than hath been yet in practice.' **(Tractate of Education.)**

Universities

Patrick Daly

A Chinese university is a very different place from its Western counterpart, and since the Cultural Revolution such differences have become even sharper. The student body is drawn, for the most part, from factory workers, the children of peasant families, and soldiers from the People's Liberation Army. There is much more emphasis today on recruiting students from less privileged backgrounds, and they are often given priority over the sons and daughters of cadres and intelligentsia. The teaching staff at a university will have undergone a period of 'intellectual remoulding' during the Cultural Revolution: this has meant varying periods at grass roots level, living among workers or peasants, working with their hands, and learning about life among ordinary people. The period of study has been shortened for most students in Chinese universities, to take into account the present-day needs of China for more lower level graduates who are able to return to their places of work upon graduation and put their newly-acquired knowledge into practice immediately. Students are generally expected to work — either on the land or in factories, or in the People's Liberation Army — for at least two years before they enter university. (There are some exceptions, particularly in fields where the demand for specialists is immediate — linguists and some teachers, for example). The method of selecting students puts great emphasis on the recommendations of the applicant's fellow-workers, other peasants in his work team, or the men and women in his PLA unit. The curriculum is biased towards the practical application of what is learnt, particularly in scientific and technical subjects. Many universities now have regular lectures by workers from the shop floor. Many are directly linked to factories or communes where the students can go for a set period each year to apply their knowledge to real situations. Many have set up their own factories within the campus.

All these are generalisations, of course, and it is difficult to generalise about university life in a country where so many of the decisions are taken at basic level, with the particular local circumstances in mind. There are problems and difficulties, at local and national level, and these are dealt with on an experimental, trial and error basis. So what holds good for one university at a given time may not be true later — methods may change, curricula may be revised, faculties may be reorganised. This makes it impossible to give a wholly true picture of what is happening in Chinese universities now. What I shall try to do is explain how some of the new methods are evolving, what criteria are used to decide educational change, and how the system was operating in mid-1973, when these words were written.

Spread of subjects

As we might expect, after the Cultural Revolution science and technology departments were quickest to reorganise and admit new students. In the first place, it was much simpler for technologists and scientists to establish direct links with factories, communes, water conservancy departments, afforestation groups, and so on, and make their theoretical work directly relevant to practice. For arts departments the process was a longer one, and the methods by which students and teachers maintain links with the masses are more fluid. But arts as well as science faculties are now accepting new students.

At Nankai University, Tientsin (**Hsinhua News Agency,** 23 March, 1972) there are nine departments with 21 disciplines — among them Chinese language and literature, philosophy, history, political economy, foreign languages, mathematics, physics. chemistry and biology. At Peking University (**Hsinhua,** 26 September, 1972) more than 60 subjects are taught by a staff of 2,000 in departments of Chinese, history, philosophy, foreign languages, physics, chemistry and 11 other fields. The Sun Yat-sen University in Kwangchow (Canton), had 9 departments and associated factories in May, 1971, according to a visitor. These were electronics, optics, rare metals, scientific materials, biology, dynamics, geography, Chinese and politics. This university ran a further five factories where both students and teachers worked, and where scientific research was being carried out. Sun Yat-sen University was also operating short-term courses in factories and rural areas and some in the university itself. The period of study varied, depending on the subject, from one to three months. Some typical areas covered were laser technology, irrigation engineering and meteorology.

Admission of students

Broadly similar methods of selection for higher education operate in Peking and Canton and this is probably true of the rest of China. Available places in higher education institutions are allocated by regional revolutionary committees to communes and factories. Candidates make written applications, which have to be backed by their work-mates; their positive qualities and their shortcomings are openly discussed. The applications are then approved by the regional revolutionary committee, which forwards them to the institution for final screening. The criteria for selection are:

1. Good socialist consciousness, proved in practice,
2. Completion of middle schooling, followed by at the very least two years work in a factory or on a commune,
3. Good health,
4. In general, age from 21 to 24 and unmarried.

These selection methods would certainly seem to guarantee worker and peasant control of higher education recruitment.

It is worth adding here that at Sun Yat-sen University, Kwangchow, a quota of students has been established for each administrative region, based on the population and the stage of agricultural and/or industrial development as well as on the educational facilities available locally. Out-of-the-way and backward areas are given higher quotas, there are no entrance examinations, and intake was in 1971 confined to Kwangtung province. The plans to widen the catchment area to include undergraduates from other provinces will obviously make this system more complicated to operate, and in Peking and Shanghai, which take students from all over China, it would be almost impossible. But even in these two cities, student intake is based on close co-operation with the basic levels from which students come.

Teaching staffs

Most of the former teachers — apart from those who found it impossible to change their approach or who had reached retirement age during the Cultural Revolution period — are now back on campus, after a period of 're-education'. The basic philosophy behind this rather bald term is explained well by Leng Sheng-ming, a professor of mathematics at Peking University, who spoke to a Hsinhua reporter in September 1972

'My lectures used to be hard to understand. The whole university knew this. But I saw it another way: it testified to my advanced and subtle learning. I regarded knowledge as my capital for fame and gain. Although Chairman Mao pointed out the orientation for us long ago, I never got the point. The Cultural Revolution has convinced me that I must change my old world outlook and dedicate my knowledge to the working people and to training successors for the proletarian revolutionary cause of our socialist motherland'. He found the new students, drawn from the ranks of workers, peasants and soldiers, rich in practical experience, but differing in apprehension. So, to make lectures more intelligible to them he studied their individual problems and traits and by combining theory and practical work he helped them to learn science in the abstract and logical reasoning.

Young and middle-aged teachers form the backbone of the teaching and scientific research staff at Peking University. Another important 'member of staff' at Chinese Universities is the worker-teacher — a man or woman from the factory floor, who is brought into the university for a period or from time to time to deliver lectures on his or her specialised knowledge. At Nankai University, for example, the teaching staff is now composed of workers, peasants and soldiers and revolutionary technicians, as well as professional teachers. A worker-teacher who took part in the trial production of a 6,000 ton hydraulic press lectures at the university on applied mechanics, and because his lectures are closely linked with practical experience, they are very effective.

Linking theory and practice

Students of science at Peking University take part in productive labour for a quarter of every academic year in factories related to their specialities. The students researching high polymer techniques in the chemistry department, for example, do laboratory work after studying the theory of the subject, and then go to work for a time in a plastics, chemical fibre or rubber plant. In this way they can see the direct link between their theoretical and laboratory work and actual polymer production.

Liberal arts students in Chinese universities are also expected to spend some time each year taking part in productive labour in factories, communes, Army units or shops, and they are also carrying out social investigations at some universities. At Peking University, for example, arts students spend four months of each year out in society. In 1971 students at the university's Chinese Department, specialising in literature, went to a production brigade on the outskirts of Peking together with their teachers. This led to creative writing from the students which formed the basis of a collection of revolutionary stories reflecting the life and work of the peasants in the brigade.

Philosophy students at the same university recently spent six weeks investigating factories, shops and schools in the city. As a result they were able to prepare 60 fact-finding reports and 30 investigation reports.

Some teachers and students in the International Politics Department had lessons on Lenin's **Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism** in a coal mine and an iron smelting mill which had been the scene of imperialist exploitation before 1949.

Methods of study

Examinations today are unlike those in Chinese universities before the Cultural Revolution. Surprise tests by teachers and catch questions are not allowed. The present examination system is designed to help the students review what they have learned and check up on the effectiveness of the teaching they get. (See p.71 of conclusion.)

The cramming method has been replaced too. In Peking University students no longer take lecture notes mechanically; these are distributed before the class so that knotty problems can be sorted out by students and teachers during class time or in group discussion periods. After a period of study, students and teachers meet together to suggest how teaching methods can be improved, and how students can improve their learning techniques.

Minorities

Special facilities are given to minority peoples in China to study at higher education institutes. For example, in Peking there is a Central Institute for Nationalities, which in 1972 had an enrolment of 700 students from 46 Chinese minority nationalities. The main purpose of this institute is to train cadres, teachers, interpreters and art and literary workers. All fees, costs and medical bills are paid by the state.

More than 400 workers and peasants from Tibet were enrolled as students in Peking, Shensi and other universities during the period November 1971 to March 1972, according to a report in **Peking Review**, March 10, 1972.

Does it work?

There are still plenty of problems in the higher education field which have yet to be ironed out. Recent reports, for example, seem to show that there is a contradiction between the entrance examinations many students are expected to take, and the work they are doing on the shop floor or in the countryside. As these words were written, a debate 'Are we departing from Mao Tse-tung's principles of the Cultural Revolution?' (**The Guardian,** 24 August 1973) was taking place in newspapers throughout China to find how this problem could be resolved: a good example of how the system allows everyone in China to become involved in trouble shooting. Since the new system of higher education has been functioning for such a short time, it is difficult to make a true estimate of the type of graduate now emerging from China's universities. There is one exception to this. The July 21 College, founded by the Shanghai Machine Tools Plant on July 21, 1968, graduated its first group of students in July 1971 (45 men and 7 women). Some 34 of these have returned to their former workshops, 10 have been assigned to the plant's grinding machine research institute, and eight have gone to other industrial complexes in China. Of the graduates who returned to their former workshops, several have been responsible for technical innovations, which would have been difficult to accomplish without the theoretical training which they received at the college. As well as using this theoretical knowledge to solve their own problems, they are passing knowledge on to their workmates. Some of them are even giving lessons. (See p.74.)

Certainly, a visitor will not fail to be impressed by the enthusiasm with which problems in education are tackled in China today. But as the Chinese are the first to admit, even such enthusiasm can create its own problems. At Tsinghua University, for example, some new students were asked to design a complete housing project soon after their studies began. Because their theoretical knowledge of mathematics and mechanics was incomplete, they could only stumble along, asking their teacher at every step. The assignment was completed, but at the end of it, they were, as the university's revolutionary committee reports, 'still in something of a fog as to the strength analysis of even the simpler structures.' They concluded that they could not master the subject without good basic theoretical knowledge.

All this does not mean that the wheel has come full circle again, and that theory has become the master of practice in Chinese universities. It is rather that a unique experiment is being conducted into the combination of both to produce an education system which is relevant to China's needs, which balances advantage and disadvantage, and whose aim is to create a society where élitism is impossible.

Examinations

Valerie Marett

The 1969 edition of **The World Book of Education**[1] is devoted to Examinations; the only reference to modern China is 'No country is reported to have abolished or to be thinking of abolishing examinations, except surprisingly China, which in ancient times had the most elaborate system'. It would be more accurate to describe China as being engaged in a thorough reappraisal of examinations, in particular the predictive function of examinations no longer serves as an integral part of selection for higher education or indeed as a 'boarding pass' to the next stage or the obtaining of a job. It is the retrospective function of examinations that is emphasised — they now serve as a guide to teachers and taught as to their success or otherwise in coping with the curriculum.

Even allowing for the non-quantitative expansion in higher education[2] which places China outside the general pattern of global development, the numbers passing through China's schools are so immense that the cost of administering nation-wide external examinations would be phenomenal. Computerised objective testing on the USA model would be equally impracticable. Any Peking-based examinations would interfere with the essential belief that the curriculum must not be remote from the environment, but should be linked with the work done by the pupils in industry and on the land.[3] There are then no national diplomas or certificates. Some decentralisation took place in the 1950's, but the entrance examinations for higher education remained in the hands of a National Enrolment Committee.[4] The examinations taken at the end of middle school are entirely controlled by the individual schools' revolutionary committees without any form of external moderation which is a feature of the British Certificate of Secondary Education. At Peking Middle School No. 31 the students have a leaving examination conducted along the lines of their usual twice-yearly tests — marks are expressed on a five point scale, and results are written into a report book, along with remarks about the individual's behaviour and ideology written by teachers and classmates. All students take the same examination — which is in no sense equivalent to 'A' levels or the Baccalaureat, since very few go on to higher education directly and those who do so eventually are selected on criteria other than examinations. In no sense do the universities appear to dictate the curricula in the schools.

In a Nanking primary school pupils take examinations every term, but many of these are of the 'open-book' type when reference books are allowed and it was emphasised that teachers take great care to 'explain' the results to each pupil. There are class discussions, weaker pupils are helped by their classmates and very few are kept down a year. Examinations then do exist — but they are essentially 'examinations without recrimination'.

The arguments put forward at the time of the establishment of the highly competitive systems of examinations in Imperial China were very similar to those which are used to defend examinations in our own society — but above all it was claimed that they would give equality of opportunity to bright students from all ranks of society. 'Competition was open, distinction came from merit and a highly literate and urbane group of public officials resulted from the system'.[5] Max Weber has described the Mandarin scholar who surmounted the system as 'possessing magical qualities in the eyes of the Chinese masses'.[6] Long before the final abolition of these examinations in 1905, abuses had crept in, yet half a century later their legacy could still be traced in the savage failure rates, the excessive bookish tradition and the way in which teachers used examinations as 'sudden attacks' on students. Even after Liberation, far from giving equality of opportunity, examinations continued to fill 'vacancies in élites' and favoured children of the traditional privileged classes. In Taipingling Agricultural Middle School in the mid-sixties, examinations (along with fees and age limits) were blamed for the fact that children of the poor and lower peasants were being denied access to the upper forms; so the production brigade decided to take over the school from the bourgeois intellectuals who 'were giving first place to intellectual education' and 'putting examination marks in command'.[7] At the Shanghai Institute of Mechanical Engineering 'under the pretext of "equal opportunity to everyone according to the results in the entrance examination", the Institute in 1960 practically shut its doors to the children of workers and peasants! Moreover, the bourgeoisie racked their brains to deliberately mark down the work done by an engineer worker student' — the passmark being 60 per cent he was assessed at 59 per cent.[8]

Schemes for reform of examinations were being tried out before the Cultural Revolution but these were not widespread.[9] In 1967 the Peking Teachers' Training Institute put out a plan for reducing the number of examinations, stating that 'creative thought' should be encouraged and admission to 'schools of a higher grade' should be based on political as well as scholastic ability.[10] At Peking University (Peita), the Vice-Chairman of the Revolutionary Committee said that 'Examinations must be seen as part of the class struggle . . . we still retain examinations but their purpose has altered dramatically — now we use them to promote study, to consolidate knowledge and to check on the effectiveness of our teaching'. As well as conventional examinations, Peita has open-book ones for which students are given the question paper two days before the actual examination. They are allowed to discuss the questions with their friends but 'one thing we make clear — students must use their own brains'. These are oral examinations, assessments on projects covering the students' work at the factories and farms. But the form of the final examination has not yet been decided. 'Certification is no longer important here . . . and at present we have no higher degrees for we see our main task to study, teach and experiment'.

At the Kwangtung Teachers' Training College, a member of staff admitted that he was one of the many who had made examinations 'deliberately difficult so that students were "controlled" by them'. Now collective discussions take place after the students have sat an examination, and sometimes results are changed as a result of the discussions. Marks are expressed on a four point scale with internal moderating. At this College, the new intake of students will take an Entrance Examination[11] but the staff stressed that this was to ascertain the student's special bent and 'cultural level' and will be used chiefly as a way of assigning students to the various departments. Special allowance will be made for older workers and cadres from minority groups, 'their cultural level as revealed by the examination may be low — but we will then know how much coaching they require.'

Changes appear to be taking place at Peking too, particularly in the Western Languages Department. End-of-term examinations now take place and 'a higher cultural level' is expected of applicants. Some students will be admitted straight from school and it seems probable that they might have some form of entrance examination.[12] But one thing is certain; the examinations which do take place will not be those of the past. In Tsinghua University, examinations are conducted in a 'lively' fashion. (In a particular examination, students in the Electronics Department were asked to rectify faulty circuits. They became so interested they asked for more complicated tasks. The students who had failed to solve the problems were helped by those who were successful.) Marks are given for creative work, and though the staff acknowledge the diligence that goes behind rote learning, this by itself scores low marks. 'Through examinations, teachers and students are in a better position to study problems in both teaching and learning and grasp the contradictions. This helps promote the enthusiasm of both.[13]

China then regards examinations as part of the curriculum, not as the dictators of it. The future of students is not decided by any single external examination taken at the end of a course. China questions the aspirations which an examination system develops and the value system which examinations so often serve.

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Conclusion

Peter Mauger

China's educational policy since the Cultural Revolution is founded on the principles set out in the following article by Mao Tse-tung (published in May 1963):

Where do correct ideas come from?

Where do correct ideas come from? Do they drop from the skies? No. Are they innate in the mind? No. They come from social practice, and from it alone; they come from three kinds of social practice, the struggle for production, the class struggle and scientific experiment. It is man's social being that determines his thinking. Once the correct ideas characteristic of the advanced class are grasped by the masses, these ideas turn into a material force which changes society and changes the world. In their social practice, men engage in various kinds of struggle and gain rich experience, both from their successes and from their failures. Countless phenomena of the objective external world are reflected in a man's brain through his five sense organs — the organs of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch: At first, knowledge is perceptual. The leap to conceptual knowledge, i.e., to ideas, occurs when sufficient perceptual knowledge is accumulated. This is one process in cognition. It is the first stage in the whole process of cognition, the stage leading from objective matter to subjective consciousness, from existence to ideas. Whether or not one's consciousness or ideas (including theories, policies, plans or measures) do correctly reflect the laws of the objective external world is not yet proved at this stage, in which it is not yet possible to ascertain whether they are correct or not. Then comes the second stage in the process of cognition, the stage leading from consciousness back to matter, from ideas back to existence, in which the knowledge gained in the first stage is applied in social practice to ascertain whether the theories, policies, plans or measures meet with the anticipated success. Generally speaking, those that succeed are correct and those that fail are incorrect and this is especially true of man's struggle with nature. In social struggle, the forces representing the advanced class sometimes suffer defeat not because their ideas are incorrect but because, in the balance of forces engaged in struggle, they are not as powerful for the time being as the forces of reaction; they are therefore temporarily defeated, but they are bound to triumph sooner or later. Man's knowledge makes another leap through the test of practice. This leap is more important than the previous one. For it is this leap alone that can prove the correctness or incorrectness of the first leap, i.e., of the ideas, theories policies, plans or measures formulated in the course of reflecting the objective external world. There is no other way of testing truth. Furthermore, the one and only purpose of the proletariat in knowing the world is to change it. Often, a correct idea can be arrived at only after many repetitions of the process leading from matter to consciousness and then back to matter, that is, leading from practice to knowledge and then back to practice. Such is the Marxist theory of knowledge, the dialectical materialist theory of knowledge. Among our comrades there are many who do not yet understand this theory of knowledge. When asked the source of their ideas, opinions. policies, methods, plans and conclusions, eloquent speeches and long articles, they consider the question strange and cannot answer it. Nor do they comprehend that matter can be transformed into consciousness and consciousness into matter, although such leaps are phenomena of everyday life It is therefore necessary to educate our comrades in the dialectical materialist theory of knowledge, so that they can orientate their thinking correctly, become good at investigation and study and at summing up experience, overcome difficulties, commit fewer mistakes, do their work better, and struggle hard so as to build China into a great and powerful socialist country and help the broad masses of the oppressed and exploited throughout the world in fulfilment of our great internationalist duty.

From the highly élitist, broken-down educational system of 1949, China now has a system of education covering virtually the whole population. Every child (except a few in remote areas) completes primary education; 80 to 90 per cent of children in cities, 60 to 70 per cent in rural areas go on to middle schools, and an increasing number of young men and women enter higher education. Part-time schools and mass literacy campaigns have to all intents and purposes wiped out illiteracy.

But, in a sense, this is only the beginning of the story. Very few Chinese remain untouched by the vast number and extraordinary range of post-school educational facilities which have sprung up all over the country, in conformity with their policy that education is a life-long process.

Every factory and most communes have a number of groups, involving on an average 80 per cent of the workforce, engaged in the study of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung thought on a continuing and ever-deepening basis. Thus, at whatever age students end their formal secondary or university education, their political studies continue, year in, year out, at their place of work. Much of this is private study, which is greatly encouraged, followed by three or four one-hour sessions of group discussion a week. Cadres spend one half-day a week in political study and also participate in the workers' study groups.

The study of politics is similarly a regular part of the daily life of peasants. It is a common sight to see peasants at the morning break sitting in a group in the fields studying an important political document, or the Communist Manifesto, or one of Mao Tse-tung's articles or, possibly, an editorial in the **People's Daily.** In many rural areas a network of adult educational facilities has been established in recent years. The mountainous Nanan County, Fukien Province, for example, with a population of 850,000 has organised a range of 1,350 evening primary schools, 258 evening middle schools and 113 evening secondary schools specialising in bookkeeping, medicine, farm machinery, electrical work and other subjects. In addition, some 330,000 adults in the county regularly attend political evening schools, newspaper-reading groups and literacy classes. These are run by the production teams providing two to five evenings of study each week except in the periods of heavy farm work. Altogether over 90 per cent of the production teams in the county have evening schools of one kind or another with an enrolment of 80 per cent of the adult population.[1]

The Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region in 1972 had 3,000 research groups of some 40,000 industrial workers, peasants and herdsmen. The industrial city of Shenyang in northwest China has 50,000 workers in technical co-operation groups specialising in 20 subjects.

Apart from the regular political study already mentioned, most factories provide spare-time education for their workers in general subjects and technology. Eighty per cent of Shanghai's factories, stores, financial and commercial departments run spare-time schools with a total student body of 70,000. In addition, in Shanghai alone, publishing houses are producing about 1,000 new books a year mostly written by worker-peasant-soldier amateur writers or writing groups.

Almost every factory and commune has its own theatrical and cultural group which puts on performances of singing, dancing and drama of a commendable standard, much of it consisting of very lively material written by themselves and drawing on their own experiences.

These are only some of the many examples which could be mentioned of the great variety of educational facilities which are being extended throughout China largely by grass-roots initiative, meeting the specific requirements of the locality. Having grasped the concept that education by no means ends at the secondary or university phase, the Chinese people show an avidity for study and learning. The emphasis is on investigation, the study of facts — Communists must always go into the whys and wherefores of anything.[2]

The philosophy of dialectical materialism is being studied in greater and greater depth not as an abstract exercise but to be used as a weapon with which the Chinese people are equipping themselves to analyse international affairs, their nation's affairs and to find solutions to technological problems.

'Man', says Mao Tse-tung, 'has constantly to sum up experience and go on discovering, inventing, creating and advancing. Ideas of stagnation, pessimism, inertia and complacency are all wrong.'[3]

This world outlook has already captured the imagination of the people and runs as a thread through all aspects of education. There is no parallel in human history of a whole nation whose thoughts are increasingly infused with the scientific approach to life and all its problems, with an urge not just for knowledge but for knowledge which they can put into practice in controlling their own destinies. China is in this respect opening up a totally new dimension in universal and life-long education.

Democratisation of Education

The changing of education from an élite privilege to a popular expectation and right is a goal presenting many problems in capitalist and third world countries.[4]

Should there be primary education for all, secondary education for all or most, increasing provision for higher education, adult education — should these provisions be regarded as a right? If so how can they be afforded? To the extent to which inadequate facilities necessitate selection, can selection be freed from class bias? What does democratic control of education mean, and can it be continuously exercised? How can the curriculum be radically changed to relate to the lives of the students and the society in which they are going to live, rather than remain a watered-down version of the 19th century curriculum created for the sons of the old ruling class? What should be the balance between expert and lay control?

The Chinese solution is to publicise for discussion the broad principles of a policy covering all aspects of education, in such a way as to **require** each locality to work out the application of the policy to its own needs and requirements. This is seen clearly in the Kirin Programme. Responsibility for managing and financial schools, (with some state aid) appointing and paying teachers, and supervising the curriculum, is placed fairly and squarely on the shoulders of the commune and production brigades.

I will give three examples seen during our tour. Firstly, the secretary of the party branch of the Liu Ling production brigade just outside Yenan, a formerly illiterate peasant of 52, his deeply-lined face surmounted by a white towelling turban, told us that all children of school age in Liu Ling now go to school — kindergarten, primary, middle school. Though he said of the production brigade as a whole, with a modesty that we found typical 'there have been some changes and improvements but we are still not satisfied with our achievements', this educational achievement was one of which the whole community were entitled to be proud, since they and not a ministry of education or local education authority had built the schools and employed and paid the teachers.

Secondly, when we visited Peking University, the welcoming party included professors of history and Chinese literature, lecturers from the Biology, Western Languages, Geography and English Departments, and students from the Russian and Political Science Departments. But the 'responsible comrade of the revolutionary committee' who gave a history of the university from its inception in 1898 to the present day, was a 32 year-old worker from the nearby Tsinghua Printing Works. As he told us of the changes since the Cultural Revolution in selection of students, course content and teaching methods, and examination procedures, there was no doubt that he was a working and knowledgeable chairman, and that he was accepted by the academics around the table as an equal.

Thirdly, at a three-hour discussion at the Nanxiang People's Commune outside Shanghai, the chairman of the revolutionary committee, in charge of all the commune schools, was a peasant. He was supported by 12 teachers and students and we discussed the application of the Kirin Programme to the commune. He answered a good many questions himself but referred others to his professional colleagues in a way which showed that he knew who was the expert on what. As with the others, there appeared to be a working understanding between teachers and leading members of the community.

As the section on primary education shows, the involvement of the whole community in education goes beyond the election of a few workers or peasants to revolutionary committees. At the school described, we saw mothers observing their children working in class, and parents told us how teachers visited their homes to discuss and enlist their co-operation in dealing with their children's difficulties. Children have regular contact with the peasants of 'their' commune and with the workers in the factory to which the school is affiliated.

The basis of teacher recruitment has changed greatly since the cultural revolution. At the Kwangtung Teachers' College outside Canton we were told that 82 per cent of the students were from rural areas and that almost all the others came from the working people, 'with a small proportion from the former exploiting classes'.

Education for what?

Our educational policy must enable everyone who receives an education to develop morally, intellectually and physically and become a worker with both socialist consciousness and culture. Mao Tse-tung.5

At Kwangtung Teachers' College, as in the other educational institutions we visited, we were told 'teachers teach for the revolution, students study for the revolution'. To this end Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung thought is central to the curriculum and related to all subjects studied and to the productive labour that is an integral part of the educational process. 'The study of socialist culture and knowledge in factories and countryside is as important as college work, and teachers and students carry on learning in this way.'

The emphasis on teachers, students, workers and peasants learning from each other is well illustrated by the practice of sending out teams from the college to provincial and even remote mountain areas. These teams are formed according to the needs of the district: some consist of a teacher from each department, some from two or three. These 'colleges in an open doorway' run short courses for untrained teachers, give refresher courses to trained teachers, advise the revolutionary committee on problems of school administration. In their turn the college staff are re-educated by the workers and peasants. 'Teachers are now becoming intellectuals **welcomed** (emphasis added) by workers, peasants and soldiers.'

They are welcomed to the extent to which they learn from as well as teach the people; to the extent to which in fact they **serve the people** — a slogan seen all over China. This is the aim of all sectors of education, to serve the people, to enable the whole people to raise their standard of living in cultural as well as economic terms. It is a development of the Yenan way, the experiment in popular education started in 1944. The stress then was on spreading rudimentary literacy and practical economic skills that would yield quick and practical returns. The schools were placed under the jurisdiction of districts, small towns and even villages — managed by the people.

Mark Selden[6] describes how students and teachers frequently worked together to adapt the curriculum to local needs. Experienced teachers travelled from village to village, training local teachers. Teachers and students included young and old, literate and illiterate, poor peasants and cadres.

> The new schools thus played a prominent role in the contemporary effort to overcome barriers between mental and physical labour, to unite thought and action, to bring together those who worked with their hands and those who worked with their minds. . . . The curriculum outlined for the new middle schools, for instance, was to 'begin with the concept of how to serve the people of the border region (principles of reconstruction) and end with the skills to serve (production and medical knowledge). Education emphasized practical knowledge, analysis of contemporary and historical conditions, and above all service.'

Selden emphasized that 'The 1944 educational goals envisaged nothing less than the participation of every man, woman and child in the educational process', and it is this vision that the Chinese Communist Party is attempting, in the years following the Cultural Revolution, to make a reality.

Ancient Chinese tradition held that the first duty of a teacher was moral instruction: but morality had a hollow ring in the context of a predatory feudal and war-lord society. Morality now means serving the people and subjugating selfishness. Some Red Guards saw this as an essential part of making revolution.

> Even if we achieve gigantic successes in our work, there is no reason whatsoever to feel conceited and arrogant. . . . We must regard ourselves as an integral part of the revolutionary force and, at the same time, regard ourselves as a target of the revolution.
>
> To regard oneself as a target of revolution means to rid one's mind of the 'ego'. If the 'ego' is in charge, one strives for personal fame, for position, power, profits and one shows off and seeks the limelight. The 'ego' is the chief enemy in our minds. It will lead to the betrayal of the revolution and the people.'[7]

The desire for personal 'fame and fortune' must be subjugated if students are to become able to use the dialectical materialist theory of knowledge described in **Where do correct ideas come from?**, in applying their studies for the furtherance of the revolution in the service of the people. Roger Howard, an English teacher at Peking University, describes the cancellation of classes in the Western Foreign Language Department for two days in April, 1973, for debates and discussions on the 'revolution in education'.[8]

> Students were hard-hitting in their criticisms of their courses, especially of the 'right' tendency to teach languages for languages' sake. 'We study English to spread revolution, not for the sake of learning English'. They wanted to be taught more everyday English to be of more practical use as interpreters. 'We should know more about our Party's policy. At the same time we should go into detail. Everyone knows medical work in China serves the broad masses of labouring people — the question is **how?** That is the point visitors will want to know, and we should know how to answer.'

It would be naive to assume that all teachers have been remoulded. The struggle between the two lines, in this case about 'Education for What?' still goes on.

Teaching methods

The schools we visited had the outward appearance of schools everywhere — rectangular classrooms, several rows of desks, single and double, teacher's table in the corner, blackboard, teacher in front of blackboard dictating the content and pace of the lesson, children doing the same thing at the same time in the same way. One might almost have been in an English classroom in a traditional school, but for two differences — the bareness of the room with its whitewashed walls unadorned (except for the portrait of Mao above the blackboard and, on the opposite walls, portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin), with naked electric light bulbs, and a minimum of educational equipment: and the wholehearted, enthusiastic concentration of the pupils on the lesson.

It may be argued that methods of mass instruction are inevitable with large classes and teachers with a low level of professional training and expertise. And indeed for certain parts of the curriculum, in the learning of basic characters, for instance, mass instruction may be the most economical method. But it is not a good way of developing the active participation of students in their education. The didactic method encourages a passive attitude and an acceptance of the teacher as the authoritative source of knowledge. It is not the way they learnt in Yenan, and it is a contradiction with Mao Tse-tung thought. 'Where do correct ideas come from? Do they drop from the skies? No. Are they innate in mind? No. They come from social practice, and from it alone'. The social practice, of course, is very much in evidence in the regular work of the students in school factory workshops and on people's communes.

There seems to be, all the world over, a stereotype of what a school should be like and of the roles teachers and pupils should adopt as soon as they get into a classroom. And though it is clear that, since the Cultural Revolution there have been fundamental changes in curriculum content, in teacher and student selection and in examination systems, teaching methods **in class** still seem to be formal. For instance, Chapter 4 of the Kirin programme talks about 'jumping a grade', implying a stratification of children on the basis of age or attainment. This rather crude method of school organisation is common practice in the West, but there have been significant advances in some English primary schools in the form of family grouping, and even in some secondary schools there are experiments with more flexible groupings, pupils of different ages and attainment learning together — and teaching each other. Though Mao says that China should be ready to learn from the West, educationalists have not yet taken note of Western educational experiments. Educational theory had been abolished from the Kwangtung Teachers' College curriculum during the Cultural Revolution 'because it was so abstract and divorced from practice'. The study of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung thought, it was considered, would enable students to adopt correct methods of teaching. The staff did not seem interested in techniques of teaching or theories of learning, and also found it difficult to concede that some students might be unsuited to teaching, for example, owing to an inability to communicate adequately with children, though this attitude may well arise from the pressing need to produce large quantities of teachers to relieve the grave shortage. They were, in fact considering the reintroduction of the study of pedagogy on an experimental basis. (**Hsinhua News Agency** reported in August 1973 that the Shanghai teachers' training college had produced a 200,000 word text book on pedagogy for the use of teachers.)

Contrasting with the formal teaching methods was the gentle, friendly attitude of teachers to pupils at all levels from kindergarten to university. Once the class was over children chatted to the teachers in a relaxed and obviously fearless way — the classical Chinese teacher-image had clearly gone by the board. **Hsinhua News Agency** publishes a story doubtless designed to foster this new relationship:

> Once a teacher punished a naughty boy who was behaving very badly. A 'little red soldier' went up to the teacher and said: 'May I give you my opinion?' The teacher encouraged him. He said: 'Chairman Mao has taught us: "persuasion, not compulsion, is the only way to convince them. Compulsion will never result in convincing them". I think your attitude towards this classmate of ours is not in line with this teaching'. The teacher welcomed this criticism and promised to correct his attitude.9

There are signs that formal methods are beginning to be questioned in the more advanced institutions. The revolutionary committee of Tsinghua University has recently published an article 'Enlivening Studies and Accentuating Student Initiative' from which the following extracts are taken:

> **Abolishing the 'Injection Method'**
>
> In reforming teaching methods, we firmly followed Chairman Mao's instructions, **'Abolish the injection method'** and **'University students, especially those in senior grades, should mainly study on their own.'**
>
> Some comrades were afraid that the new entrants, whose educational level was not too high, would find private study difficult, and this would affect the planned progress. They reasoned that 'more cramming means more learning'. This showed a lack of understanding of the importance of reforming teaching methods. As a result, many classes tried cramming, and the students were assigned a passive role in their studies.
>
> To change this, the teachers of some classes, under the leadership of the Party branches, tried out a teaching method which incorporated enlightenment, experimentation and research, and actively advocated private study. They distributed teaching materials, spending only a little time on lectures designed to induce students to think, and left the rest of the time for them to study problems, textbooks and reference books, and make experiments or carry out social investigation and classroom discussion. This livened up the studies.
>
> One illustration of this was the topic on the 'application of derivatives' in the class majoring in forging. The mathematics teacher first held up an enamel mug and asked the students why was it that, of two mugs holding the same quantity of water, the one with a radius equal to its height used the least raw material? Having posed this question of practical interest — economizing on raw materials — to the worker-students, he went on to abstract it into solving the maximum and minimum value of a mathematical function. Then he pointed out that the aim of this lesson was to use calculus theorems to study the maximum and minimum values of mathematical functions. This led the students to the heart of the matter, and they began to show ani-

mation and initiative. In conducting private study, the teachers also tried to enlighten the students instead of resorting to straight questions and answers. The mathematics class, which instituted these reforms earlier than elsewhere, found after seven months that its students took a more active part in study, raised livelier questions and ventured opinions with greater freedom of thought, generally passing their examinations with excellent marks. Those who had less grounding than others also began to turn from being passive to being active.

Whether reforms can be put through in teaching methods mainly depends on the teachers. In some of the better-run classes, the teachers frequently mix with their students to get to know them and ascertain their educational standard and their attitude and methods in study. They co-operate closely with the Party branch to do ideological work well and instruct the students according to the concrete conditions of each. With some students who found it hard to grasp the essentials through self-study, for instance, the teachers helped them find the main contradiction. Teachers also pay particular attention to cultivating a backbone force and setting up model examples: students who have done well in private study are asked to pass on their experience to the others, and those up front in their studies are asked to help those lagging behind. This means that the teachers have to teach students both scholastically and politically, do ideological work in the course of teaching, and try hard to take part in practice in order to **'learn to use the Marxist method to observe, pose, analyse and solve problems.'**

Compiling Teaching Material Suitable for Private Study

There must be teaching material suitable for private study if the injection method is to be abolished and the students are to be encouraged to study problems on their own. Up to now we have not done too much in reforming the teaching material we have compiled. There are, however, some which have been found suitable.

Examinations Should Be Lively Too

An important question in reforming teaching principles and methods is the reform of the old examination system. Here, too, the question of line must be taken into account. The old system treated students like enemies and made sudden attacks upon them, trying to catch them unaware. This must be changed. This does not mean, however, that examinations are to be abolished. A more lively system of testing is called for: topics should be made public beforehand and the students should be allowed to study and answer questions by referring to whatever books they need, so that they can concentrate on training their ability to analyse and solve questions.

The main object of giving marks is to induce students to follow Chairman Mao's ideas on education in regard to the attitude and method of study. They are encouraged to apply basic principles and methods to practice. In one electronics examination, two students in the silicon controlled rectifier class chose power amplifier as their topic. They analysed the circuits found in relevant literature from abroad and applied the basic theories to make bold innovations, with the result that they were able to eliminate an input and an output transformer, thus reducing the amplifier's size and weight. This creative work received high marks. The example encouraged other students to do creative work too. A few who still clung to learning by rote revealed their weakness through the examinations, and were given lower marks by the teachers while due acknowledgement was made of their diligent study. These students were helped to improve their study methods.

Both teachers and students feel that examinations and marks in the above manner help check the quality of teaching and attain the aim of summing up experience to reach a higher level. Still more important, it upholds creativity and opposes cramming, and advocates a truthful and modest scientific attitude as opposed to a superficial one. Through the examinations, teachers and students are in a better position to study problems and experience in both teaching and learning and grasp the contradictions. This helps promote the enthusiasm of both.10

The publication of this article indicates that the methods described are not common practice but that these are the methods that some educational thinkers are putting forward for consideration. Given the fact that this is a period of experimentation, and that the Tsinghua methods are so much in tune with Marxism-

Leninism-Mao Tse-tung thought, we can look forward to widespread experimentation in teaching methods along these lines.

Education as a lifelong process

Education, is regarded as a process continuing throughout life. Production brigade teams meet every morning to read an article in the **People's Daily** or one of Mao's articles, discussing it in relation to their work, before going off together to the fields. Workshop teams in factories do the same. A recent pamphlet describes how peasants of the Chin Chien Production Brigade of Kiangsha County, Chekiang Province, studied Mao's philosophical work 'On Contradiction'.

> They began by reading through the article paragraph by paragraph, much as students in school might, and became confused and discouraged. Not until they analysed the contradictions in their own work did they understand the practical use of the dialectic method. For instance, Hsiang-mei, the deputy secretary of the Production Brigade Party Board, heard a peasant looking at the rich crops and saying that they could take it a little easy now. She pointed out some rows of rice eaten by rice borers and said 'Everything divides into two, the main aspect and the minor one. In general, our harvest this year is good, and that's the main aspect. But still there are some losses. This is the minor aspect. We must concentrate on the main aspect and encourage the commune members. But we shouldn't ignore the minor aspect. We must understand that our work still has many shortcomings, and the main and minor aspects can change into each other. That is to say, if we don't pay attention to solving the minor aspect, it may become the main one. A bumper harvest is in sight, but if we don't work hard, we won't get it. How can we feel we may take it a little easy?11

May 7 Cadre Schools[12]

Full-time Party cadres, office workers, administrators, may become removed from the problems of the people, may then think they know what is best for the people and so make decisions without consulting them. Here are the seeds of a new crop of élitists. To prevent this happening the Party set up re-education schools for Party administrators, called May 7 Cadre Schools, to which they go for periods ranging from several months to two years. The schools are residential, and generally situated in a barren countryside. The students engage in farm work, including land reclamation. The intention is that the school should become as self-sufficient as possible, and though they receive advice from the peasants on neighbouring communes, the students must do the hard work themselves. At the same time an essential part of their work is theoretical study, which is linked to their practical work.

The Chairman of the revolutionary committee at a May 7 Cadre School outside Peking told us that most of the students were three-door cadres:

> They came out of the family door into the school door, and thence into the office door. They look down on physical labour at first. When they come here they have to use a hoe, carry manure and stones; they are faced with dirt and laborious work. Through study and physical labour they learn that physical labour is the most glorious thing, because it has created everything. You saw that young woman cleaning out that hut? Formerly when she saw the night soil being carried out she had to hold her nose. Now that she has seen the poor peasants treasuring it, she says, 'It is not the manure that is dirty, but my ideas'. Now she takes the lead in the hardest and dirtiest work; we call her the iron girl.

The main purpose of the schools, he told us, was to temper the cadres with physical labour allied to Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung thought. Thought must not be divorced from workers, peasants and soldiers, nor from production. Cadres must absorb the good qualities of the working people. 'We are not concerned with how much we produce — but how we are changing.?[13]

David Bonavia reports that the May 7 Cadre Schools . . .

> Are apparently becoming more and more entrenched in the country's social and political structure. This unique institution — one of the most original experiments devised in a socialist country — is evidently regarded as a fundamental element in the system for as long as can be foreseen. . . . Foreigners in Peking have occasionally noticed that some officials with whom they deal return from cadre school not only bronzed and lean, but more serious and flexible in their attitude to their work.[14]

Education must serve proletarian politics and be combined with productive Labour (Mao Tse-tung)

A polemical article in the journal **Red Flag** against the ideas of Kairov, a Soviet educational writer, emphasises the class nature of education.

> In class society, education is a phenomenon of class struggle. Every class educates and remoulds the younger generation in accordance with its own world outlook and political line, training its own successors and thereby achieving the purpose of consolidating its own rule. After seizing political power the proletariat must turn education, which is an instrument for bourgeois rule, into an instrument for demolishing this rule and for completely eliminating the bourgeoisie and all the exploiting classes. [15]

Throughout this booklet, constant reference has been made to the emphasis China places on combining all stages of education with active work in agriculture and industry. Many educational systems have paid lip-service to the principle of the unity of theory and practice, and Marx forecast the development of education under socialism in this passage:

> As we can learn in detail from a study of the life and work of Robert Owen, the germs of the education of the future are to be found in the factory system. This will be an education which, in the case of every child over a certain age, will combine productive labour with instruction and physical culture, not only as a means of increasing social production, but as the only way of producing fully developed human beings.[16]

China has so far been the only country to attempt to put this precept into practice in a serious and principled way and, as we have seen, its implementation has involved a long, hard struggle between the two lines in education — a struggle that, according to Mao, will continue for a very long time. The outcome of that struggle is — or should be — of intense interest to us in the West, because of the unique quality of her educational experiment. In the capitalist world the dilemma is how to satisfy the demand for open access to education, especially secondary and higher education. Given scarce resources, which reform comes first — nursery education? primary? secondary? higher education? gifted children? disadvantaged children?

The dilemma, certainly in this country, is more obvious and pressing in the field of higher education — more pressing because it has become accepted over the years that anyone with the required entrance qualifications has a prescriptive right to higher education. But the increase in the numbers of such would-be students, caused by the rise in the birthrate and the democratisation of secondary education makes the honouring of that right extremely difficult. Hence the dilution of higher education proposed in the recent White Paper ironically entitled **Education: Framework for Expansion** — with not a mention of the 85 per cent of the population who will receive no higher education at all. Another dilemma is what to do with the graduates, because the question **Education for What?** has never been nationally answered — or asked.

The combination of education with productive labour in China has obvious economic advantages, but more important is the constant interaction and interrelation between agriculture, industry and education at all stages, which makes more likely the emergence of 'correct ideas' — educational practices that reflect the needs and aspirations of society. The methods of selection for higher education (see p.55) are also designed to ensure that 'Education must serve proletarian politics'. Jean Cardonnel, a member of the Dominican order recently returned from China, tells of his surprise at seeing, in a classroom of philosophy students in Peking University, sent by their respective units of production, a worker, a peasant and two People's Liberation army men.[17]

And new types of higher education are evolving on the lines of the July 21 Workers' University set up by the Shanghai Machine Tools Plant in 1968.

> The first class of 52 worker-students graduated in 1971 — in three years. The second class has 98 workers. There are 30 teachers and staff members. The school seems very small, but because dozens of well-equipped shops in the plant serve as its classrooms and many veteran workers and engineers do the teaching, it is actually very big.
>
> One of the school's characteristics is that all its students are workers with practical experience. The men and women in the present class come from 22 machine-building plants in Shanghai. Their average age at enrolment was 26, and their average work experience was eight years. Some have worked nearly two decades, others are middle school graduates with only three years' work experience.
>
> All these worker-students were selected by their fellow workers. They pay no tuition or fees, continue to get their full pay and enjoy all worker benefits. They all have a point in common — they are highly conscious of what the leaders and their fellow workers expect of them and they study to contribute more to the building of socialism.

The article goes on to describe how professors and engineers collaborate closely.

> The professors have had years of experience in teaching basic theory at universities of science and engineering and some practical experience. The engineers have wide practical experience and a certain theoretical knowledge. . . . These two kinds of teachers prepare lessons together so that they can learn from each other and collaborate for better teaching.[18]

I recall talking to a woman teaching in the electrical workshop at No. 31 Middle

School, Peking (see p.32). This was her second stint of secondment from the 'parent' factory. 'Are you a teacher or a worker?' I asked. She laughed: 'At the factory I am a worker and here they say I'm a teacher.'

No-one would claim that the Chinese have solved all their educational problems, least of all the Chinese themselves, who constantly refer to their shortcomings. But it is these growing points which make the study of education in China so exciting. With their insistence on the interdependence of education and production, with their emphasis on 'the three kinds of social practice, the struggle for production, the class struggle and scientific experiment', with their profound belief in the educability of **everyone,** with their extraordinary patience, their confidence and their humour, it is possible to envisage the disappearance of formal schooling as such (as Ivan Illich has so persuasively described, but one cannot see operating in a capitalist society) in — what? 40, 50 years? and its replacement by a more flexible and natural way of learning, with every 'capable person' being at times a teacher and at times a learner. Perhaps the words of Jack Belden's Border Region friend were prophetic when he said: 'Life is education; society is a school.'

Notes

1. **Hsinhua News,** 2 July 1971.
2. **Rectify the party's style of work,** p.25.
3. **Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung,** Chap. 22.
4. These problems are discussed in detail in an article by Unesco official Dr Michael Huberman. **Reflections on the Democratisation of Secondary and Higher Education, Times Educational Supplement,** August 21, 1970.
5. **On the correct handling of contradictions among the people.** Foreign Language Press. Peking 1960.
6. Selden, Mark. **The Yenan Way in Revolutionary China.** Harvard University Press, 1971. pp.271-2.
7. From Conference of Allied Red Guards of Philosophy and Social Sciences Department of Academy of Science. **Peking Review,** April 7, 1967.
8. **Times Educational Supplement,** June 29, 1973, p.15.
9. **Hsinhua News Agency,** May 31, 1973.
10. **Peking Review,** February 23, 1973.
11. **Philosophy is no Mystery:** Peasants put their study to work. Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1972.
12. So-called from a directive of Chairman Mao's of that date, 1966.
13. There is an account of a visit to a May 7 Cadre School in Macciocchi, Aria Antonia, **Daily Life in Revolutionary China.** Monthly Review Press, 1972.
14. **Times,** August 2, 1973.
15. **Red Flag** 1970, No. 2 Issue. **Hsinhua News Agency,** March 7, 1970, published a summary of the article.
16. **Capital** Vol. II, chapter XV, section 9.
17. **Le Monde,** July 29, 1973.
18. **China Reconstructs,** Peking, July 1973.

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Education

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PRICE, R. F. **Education in Communist China.** London 1970.
(describes Chinese educational system to 1966: the study benefits from author's experience of teaching in China, but material on Cultural Revolution only to 1968 and very brief.)

FRASER, Stewart & HSU, Kuang Ling. **Chinese Education and Society: a Bibliographic Guide.** New York 1972.
SHIRK, Susan. **The 1963 temporary work regulations for full-time middle and primary schools: commentary and translation.** China London Quarterly 55, 1973.

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HINTON, William. **Hundred Day War: the Cultural Revolution at Tsinghua University.** New York 1972.
RIDLEY, C. P., GODWIN, P. H. B., and DOOLIN, D. J. **The Making of a Model Citizen in Communist China.** Stanford 1971.
(analysis of sample of 10 Chinese primary school textbooks published 1957-1964: analysis highly questionable, but the extensive translations from the texts are very useful.)

Appendix — draft programme for primary and middle schools in the Chinese countryside

The **People's Daily** on 12 May, 1969 published a programme for primary and middle school education in China's rural areas drafted by the revolutionary committee of Lishu county, Kirin province. The draft programme filled the front page of the paper under the banner headline: 'Discussion on turning state-run primary schools over to production brigades'. This discussion has been continuing in the paper for many months.

In an editorial note accompanying the draft programme, the **People's Daily** wrote: 'We are publishing the "Programme for primary and middle school education in the rural areas (draft)" worked out by the revolutionary committee of Lishu county, Kirin province, for general discussion, The programme was drafted by the revolutionary committee of the county in co-operation with other departments. We made some modifications after consulting the poor and lower-middle peasants, teachers and students in a number of communes. Some of the differing views are put in brackets. We hope that the poor and lower-middle peasants, revolutionary teachers and students and the People's Liberation Army commanders and fighters supporting agriculture throughout the country as well as the comrades concerned on the revolutionary committees in various provinces, regions and counties will take an active part in this discussion and put forward their suggestions for additions or modifications. This will help us pool the wisdom of the masses, sum up experience and take into consideration the diverse conditions in various localities. We shall be able to improve and enrich the content of the programme and make it more suitable to the actual conditions in various places after it is discussed for some time and revised'.

The programme reads in full:

Chapter one. General programme

The primary and middle schools in the rural areas are a new type of socialist school directly managed by the poor and lower-middle peasants under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party.

These schools must hold aloft the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung thought, put proletarian politics to the fore and in an all-round way carry out Chairman Mao's ' May Seventh' directive:'**the same holds good for the students too. While their main task is to study, they should also learn other things, that is to say, they should not only learn book knowledge, they should also learn industrial production, agricultural production and military affairs. They also should criticise and repudiate the bourgeoise.**'

The rural schools must resolutely carry out Chairman Mao's policy, '**education must serve proletarian politics and be combined with productive labour**'. Eliminate the pernicious influence of the counter-revolutionarv revisionist line on education, criticize the remnants of old ideas, culture, customs and habits and ensure that Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line commands the field of education politically, ideologically and organizationally.

The primary and middle schools must meet the demand of the children of the poor and lower-middle peasants for schooling, open their doors wide to such children and truly serve the interests of the poor and lower-middle peasants and other commune members.

The aim of education in the countryside is to '**enable everyone who receives an education to develop morally, intellectually and physically and become a worker with both socialist consciousness and culture**'. It should enable the young people to temper themselves in the three great revolutionary movements of class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experiment and become reliable successors to the cause of the proletarian revolution loyal to the great leader Chairman Mao, to Mao Tse-tung thought and to Chairman Mao's revolutionary line and whole-heartedly serving the great majority of the people of China and the world.

Chapter two. Leadership

Article 1. In accordance with Chairman Mao's teaching, **'In the countryside, schools and colleges should be managed by the poor and lower-middle peasants — the most reliable ally of the working class'.** The middle schools should establish 'three-in-one' revolutionary committees which comprise poor and lower-middle peasants, who are the mainstay, commune and brigade cadres and representatives of the revolutionary teachers and students. Such committees should be placed under the leadership of the party organizations and revolutionary committees of the commune and the production brigade. The primary school should be placed under the unified leadership of the brigade's leading group in charge of education. Representatives of the school who are members of the leading group are in charge of the routine work of the schools.

(Some comrades think that the commune revolutionary committee should establish a committee for the revolution in education, but some other comrades hold that such a committee is unnecessary.)

Article 2. Following are the main tasks of the poor and lower-middle peasants in managing the schools: ensure that Chairman Mao's proletarian line and principles on education and his proletarian policies are carried out to the letter; do a good job in the school's struggle-criticism-transformation by depending on **'the masses of revolutionary students, teacher and workers in the schools and colleges and on the activists among them'**; bring about the ideological revolutionization of the teachers and decide upon and review the expenditure of the schools.

Article 3. In managing schools the poor and lower-middle peasants should apply the principle of democratic centralism, exercise political leadership over the schools and hear reports on the work at regular intervals. The representatives of the poor and lower-middle peasants should constantly supervise and review the work of the schools. They should study the important questions in the schools and take decisions on them. Under ordinary circumstances, they should fulfil their duty in their spare time.

Chapter three. Ideological and political work

Article 4. Politics is the commander, the soul in everything. The fundamental task in the ideological and political work of these schools is to ensure that Mao Tse-tung thought take firm root in all positions of education and that the living study and application of Mao Tse-tung thought is put in first place in all the work of the schools.

Article 5. Arm the teachers and students with Chairman Mao's theory of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, constantly familiarize them with the situation and tasks and the principles and policies of the party and raise their consciousness of class struggle and the struggle between the two lines. Teach the students to have a clear aim in studying and to take the revolutionary road of integrating themselves with the workers, peasants and soldiers.

(Some comrades suggest that 'educate the students always to maintain the fine qualities of the poor and lower-middle peasants' should be added to the ideological and political work.)

Article 6. Learn from the Liberation Army, give prominence to proletarian politics, persist in the 'four firsts' (footnote one) and energetically foster the 'three-eight' working style (footnote two).

Article 7. A new-type, proletarian relationship between the teachers and students should be established in the rural primary and middle schools: they should encourage each other politically, help each other ideologically, learn from each other in teaching and study and care for each other's welfare.

Article 8. Education by the school, society and the family should be combined, and the three sides should jointly shoulder their responsibility for doing good ideological and political work among the students.

Article 9. Bring into full play the exemplary and vanguard role of the Communist Youth League members and Red Guards in the schools and enable them to help the party organizations and school revolutionary committees to do a good job in ideological and political work.

They should actively propagate Mao Tse-tung thought, take part in extra-curricular public activities and strengthen their revolutionary spirit, scientific approach and sense of organization and discipline.

(Some comrades suggest adding 'consolidate the Little Red Soldier organisations'.)

Chapter four. Distribution of schools and length of schooling

Article 10. All irrational rules and regulations in the old schools should be abolished. Necessary proletarian rules and regulations should be instituted in accordance with specific conditions and a revolutionary new order established.

Article 11. In setting up such primary and middle schools, the principle of **'make it convenient for peasants' children to go to nearby schools'** should be followed and the confines of administrative areas should be broken.

The primary school should be run by the production brigade. The middle school should be run by the commune, or branches of it set up in several villages, or run jointly by brigades, or run solely by a brigade where conditions permit. The commune or the brigades will cover the school expenses, plus state aid.

Article 12. There should be an uninterrupted nine-year system, and the division into stages can be made according to local needs and conditions.

Article 13. In accordance with the specific needs of local agricultural development, counties and communes may run some agricultural technical schools enrolling students who come from and will return to their communes after graduation so as to popularize agro-technique and train agro-technicians.

Article 14. Eliminate age restrictions for enrolment, which were enforced by the counter-revolutionary revisionist line. Abolish the old systems for examination and leaving students in the same class without promotion. Allow those students who excel politically, ideologically and in their studies to jump a grade.

The enrolment for middle schools should be both by recommendation and selection, giving priority to the children of workers, poor and lower-middle peasants, revolutionary martyrs and armymen.

(As regards the proper age to start primary school, some think it should be at age six while others think it should be at age seven.)

Article 15. The school year in general should start in the spring so as to facilitate over-all unified state planning.

Article 16. Those who complete rural primary and middle schools should mainly work in the countryside; they should take part in the three great revolutionary movement of class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experiment, and work for socialist construction.

Chapter five. Teachers

Article 17. **'In the problem of transforming education it is the teachers who are the main problem'.** The rural primary and middle schools should strive to build up their ranks of proletarian teachers.

Article 18. Conscientiously purify and strengthen the ranks of teachers in accordance with Chairman Mao's policy of uniting with, educating and remoulding intellectuals. Encourage the present teachers to serve the poor and lower-middle peasants. Clear out class enemies who sneaked into the ranks of the teachers. In strengthening the ranks of the teachers, recommended poor and lower-middle peasants, demobilized soldiers, and educated young people having been tempered in manual labour for a certain period, who hold aloft the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung thought and are qualified to teach. The appointment and dismissal of teachers should be discussed by the poor and lower-middle peasants, proposed by the revolutionary committee of the production brigade for endorsement by the revolutionary committee of the commune, and reported to the revolutionary committee of the county.

Article 19. Recommend poor and lower-middle peasants with practical experience, revolutionary cadres, and militiamen who are activists in the living study and application of Mao Tse-tung thought, to be part-time teachers or to form lecturers' groups.

Article 20. In line with Chairman Mao's teaching that **'being educators and teachers, they themselves must first be educated'**, the teachers should take an active part in the three great revolutionary movements, and, by taking part in labour in the production teams at regular intervals and in other ways, consciously accept re-education by the poor and lower-middle peasants so as to remould their world outlook.

Arrangements should be made to ensure that the teachers have adequate time needed to raise their educational level and study problems related to their work. Help the teachers constantly raise their professional competence by making arrangements for them to study at their posts or get special full-time training in rotation.

Article 21. The production brigade should take over the management of state-run primary schools in the rural areas. The teachers should be paid instead by the brigade on the work-point system, supplemented by state subsidies. In general, this new wage system should not lower the present living standards of the teachers. The work points received are to be reckoned annually. Men and women teachers are to receive equal pay for equal work.

(With regard to the pay of middle school teachers, one view is that they should be paid according to the work-point system plus a state subsidy; another view is that the methods should be fixed after further study and that the work-point system should not be adopted.)

Article 22. Before the promulgation of new regulations, the existing regulations should be carried on with regard to sick leave and maternity leave for teachers. Free medical care for them with the cost borne by the state, and burial expenses. For teachers who have not been transferred to work in the production brigades where their homes are. Leave should be granted for them to visit their families.

Article 23. The appropriate number of students in each class in the rural primary and middle schools should be between 30 and 50. As for the size of the teaching staff, on the average there should be 2.5 teachers to each middle school class (the exact number can be fixed by the commune or production brigade according to the school grade), and 1.3 teachers to each primary school class.

Chapter six. Teaching

Article 24. In arranging the curriculum, adhere to the principles of giving prominence to proletarian politics, of combining theory with practice and of making the courses fewer and better. This is in line with Chairman Mao's teachings that **'courses should be fewer and better. The teaching material should be thoroughly transformed, in some cases beginning with simplifying complicated material'** and **'while their man task is to study, students should also learn other things'.**

Five courses are to be given in primary school: politics and language, arithmetic, revolutionary literature and art, military training and physical culture, and productive labour.

Five courses are to be given in middle school: education in Mao Tse-tung thought (including modern Chinese history, contemporary Chinese history and the history of the struggle between the two lines within the party), Basic knowledge for agriculture (including mathematics, physics, chemistry and economic geography), revolutionary literature and art (including language), military training and physical culture (including the study of Chairman Mao's concepts on people's war, strengthening the idea of preparedness against war, and activities in military training and physical culture), and productive labour.

(Another view on the middle school curriculum is that it should include: education in Mao Tse-tung thought, general knowledge about agriculture, mathematics, physics, chemistry, language, revolutionary literature and art and military training and physical culture.)

With regard to the importance of the various courses, politics is of primary importance and should be put first in order, relative to productive labour and general knowledge and culture, but in arranging time, more periods should be given to courses in general knowledge and culture. It is appropriate for these courses to account for about 60 per cent of the periods for study in middle school and not less than 70 per cent in primary school.

Article 25. With regard to arranging teaching time for the whole school year, schools should open classes for about forty weeks of the year (including the time taken up by courses in productive labour) and the studenta given about 35 days of leave during the busy farming seasons.

The length of time can be increased or reduced in accordance with the specific conditions in the locality and the age of the students.

(Some poor and lower-middle peasants proposed that one and a half to two months' leave is needed during the busy farming seasons.)

The school should give about 35 days of winter and summer vacations, according to local climate.

(Some comrades suggest that this should be decided by areas in line with local climate.)

Article 26. In accordance with Chairman Mao's instruction **'teaching material should have local character. Some material on the locality and the villages should be included'**, aside from the teaching material compiled by the state, localities should organize workers, peasants and soldiers and revolutionary teachers and students to compile teaching material on the area as supplementary teaching material.

Article 27. In teaching, theory should be combined with practice. Chairman Mao's 'ten teaching methods' should be applied by encouraging the students to investigate for themselves, relating what is near to what is far and what is elementary to what is advanced so that the initiative of the students is stimulated for study.

The method of teachers and students teaching each other and commenting on their teaching and study should be followed. The methods of combining teaching both in the classroom and on the spot and teaching by both full-time and part-time teachers should be used so as to link study closely with practice.

In the upper grades of the primary schools and in middle school, students should be encouraged to undertake self-study and discussion, and to learn to use Mao Tse-tung thought to distinguish fragrant flowers from poisonous weeds. Students should be given time to read, think, analyse, criticize and study problems.

Article 28. A reasonable amount of homework should be assigned to students and a certain number of tests and examinations should be given. Open book tests and practical skills are methods to be used in raising and testing the students' ability in analysing and solving problems. The teachers should conscientiously mark and correct the homework and test papers of the students.

Chapter seven. Run schools on a part-time work, part-time study basis

Article 29. The road of relying on our own efforts should be firmly followed and diligence and frugality should be practised in running schools so as to lighten the burden on the poor and lower-middle peasants. Extravagance and waste and the tendency to seek grandeur and what is bourgeois should be opposed.

Where conditions permit, the primary and middle schools should set up bases for production and labour in agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, fishery and side-line occupations. Where circumstances allow, scientific research should be conducted.

Article 30. Follow Chairman Mao's teaching **'rural students should make use of their vacations, week-ends and holidays and spare time to return to their own villages to take part in production'.** The primary way is for the students to participate in production in the people's commune, the production brigade and the production team, while their participation in labour arranged by the schools is supplementary. The main form of participation in production conducted by schools should be productive labour classes.

All income from such production should be taken care of by the people's communes and production brigades.

Footnote one: 'four firsts' means: 1. as between man and weapons, give first place to man; 2. as between political and other work, give first place to political work; 3. as between ideological and routine tasks in political work, give first place to ideological work; 4. in ideological work, as between ideas in books and the living ideas currently in people's minds, give first place to the living ideas currently in people's minds.

Footnote two: the 'three-eight' working style: the 'three' refers to a firm and correct political orientation, an industrious and simple style of work, and flexible strategy and tactics; the 'eight' refers to the eight characters which mean unity, alertness, earnestness and liveliness.