

EDUCATION, IDEOLOGY AND  
ECONOMICS IN CHINA AFTER MAO

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ABSTRACT

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The intense political competition between the Maoist line and the revisionist line has settled down into an economic revolution through the transformation of the education system and a new institutional and ideological framework.

The priority of economic recovery over political class struggle appears to stem from a serious economic imperative whereby political and ideological considerations become perfunctory and reform proposals are put forward on principally economic grounds, indicating an alternative route to the Chinese Revolution.

The study evaluates the respective bearings of political ideology and economic necessity on the post-Mao educational reform and the problems which arise in an attempt to shed some light on the spirit and substance of the revamped education system.

Apparently, the post-Mao educational formula is one that is more academic than Mao's revolutionary model, but more revolutionary than that of the early sixties.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### I. Statement of the Problem

The socialist revolution in China is a total revolution aimed at establishing a new society and a new way of life. While the older people with old mentality must be remolded, the new generation is being molded according to the new state ideology, that is, "Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought." And it is this ideology which lies at the heart of China's educational system but which also constitutes the cause of much controversy over actual educational practices due to conflicts within the ideology. As Michael Yahuda has underlined: "This approach ('ideology' is counterposed to 'reality') tends to depict ideologically committed leaders as continuously seeking to bend an intractable reality to their will."<sup>1</sup> By focussing on the ideological factor in this particular way, the role of ideology (political and economic) in the post-Mao educational reform should receive its special attention in the present study.

The concept "ideology" is here defined, in the words of Franz Schurmann, as "a manner of thinking characteristic of an organization."<sup>2</sup> The significance of this definition is that not

<sup>1</sup> Michael Yahuda, "Approaches to Chinese Politics," in Political Studies (Vol. XXVI, No. 2, 1978), p. 262.

<sup>2</sup> F. Schurmann, Ideology and Organization in Communist China (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1968), p. 18.

only can a political system be viewed as an organization in its own right, but it also typically embodies a diverse array of organizations, each of which, by definition, possesses an ideology of some kind.<sup>1</sup> The prominence of ideology becomes particularly conspicuous in communist political systems, not only because they are invariably distinguished by the dominant role of a powerful organization, the communist party, but also because they are unequivocally and irreversibly committed to the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, no matter how divergent their respective interpretations of the latter may be, as it is in the case of the Soviet Union and China.

In his classic analysis of the ideology of the Chinese Communist Party, Schurmann makes a distinction between "pure ideology" and "practical ideology." The former is "a set of ideas designed to give the individual a unified and conscious world view," while the latter is "a set of ideas designed to give the individual rational instruments for action." In Schurmann's view, the CCP equates Marxism-Leninism with pure ideology, construing it as fixed and unchanging. It is only when the pure ideology of Marxism-Leninism is combined with the concrete practice

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<sup>1</sup>This accounts for the persistent growth of factional politics in the Chinese society. See, e.g., Barbara Pillsbury, "Factionalism Observed: Behind the 'Face' of Harmony in A Chinese Community," The China Quarterly (No. 74, 1978), pp. 241-272.

<sup>2</sup>See, e.g., John Gurley, "The Dialectics of Development: USSR Versus China," Modern China (No. 2, April 1978), pp. 125-156.

of revolution and contradiction in China, he argues, that practical ideology emerges, namely, the "thought of Mao Tse-tung." It is through this practical application that Marxism is sinified.<sup>1</sup> As such, the thought of Mao Tse-tung is viewed as "ever-changing and ever expanding," in Schurmann's view. He goes on to say that the essence of the CCP world view is the theory of class struggle and that "the theory of contradictions, derived from Marxism, serves as the central idea linking pure and practical ideology."<sup>2</sup>

According to Charles Cary, ideology can be expressed or reflected in an individual's belief system or, in socialist terms, "world outlook," or "world view." Under world view is understood an individual's system of philosophical, scientific, political, moral and aesthetic ideas and convictions, which express a conception of his natural and social environment and his attitude toward it, and determine the general direction of all of his activity.<sup>3</sup> All Chinese citizens are expected to possess such a common world view reflecting Marxist-Leninist ideology and Mao Tse-tung Thought.

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<sup>1</sup>See, for example, Stuart Schram, "The Marxist," in Dick Wilson (ed.), Mao Tse-tung in the Scales of History (Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 65.

<sup>2</sup>Franz Schurmann, ibid., pp. 22, 24 and 27.

<sup>3</sup>Charles Cary, "Patterns of Emphasis upon Marxist-Leninist Ideology," in Comparative Education Review, No. 1, February, 1976, p. 11.

Whether Chinese people do possess a common world view reflecting Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideology is an important political question. According to this ideology, communist society is the culminating stage of societal development, and citizens are morally obliged to advance that development. Hence, the transformation of China from a socialist into a communist society is possible but not automatic. In other words, communism must be constructed, and the construction of communism necessitates work and sacrifice. A commonly held Marxist-Leninist-Maoist world view would presumably motivate the willing contributions of Chinese citizens to this job and thereby expedite its completion.

The acquisition by Chinese young people of a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist world view is not left to chance, however. For example, one of the official tasks of the Chinese schools is to inculcate in the young people a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist world view, and to carry out this task the school uses not formal instruction and extracurricular activities. Individuals with a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist world view are morally obliged to display selflessness, altruism, social responsibility, and, in Maoist terms, the readiness to "serve the people." Such indeed is the principal concern of socialist education, and an inherent part of the political socialization required for building a classless society. In Lenin's words, this transformation of the character and consciousness of a people is "the beginning of a revolution that is much more difficult, more material, more radical and decisive than the over-

throw of the bourgeois, for it is a victory over personal conservativeness, indiscipline, petty-bourgeois egoism, a victory over the habits that accursed capitalism left as a heritage to the workers and peasant."<sup>1</sup>

Once a political ideology is accepted, it tends to perpetuate itself in all fields of a society with marked vitality.<sup>2</sup> It appears that is perpetuation in the field of education is becoming increasingly apparent in any society since the turn of the century, especially in a society controlled by a strong single-party government such as in the Chinese society. It follows, therefore, that in spite of important ideological and tactical differences among existing socialist states, an examination of their educational systems and philosophies underlying these systems reveals points of convergences. Among these is a clear and consistent formulation of the kind of person socialist schools would produce. The embodiment of the socialist ideas is the person whose actions are motivated by the needs of others and by socialist construction.

The building of socialism, according to the traditional Marxists, demands in the first instance a condition of material affluence to be shared by all according to needs. This is the highest ideal of socialist economy. Economic development in

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<sup>1</sup>V.I. Lenin, "A Great Beginning," in Selected Works (No. IX, New York, 1937), pp. 423-424.

<sup>2</sup>Harold D. Lasswell, Politics: Who Gets What, When, How (New York: The World Publishing Co., 1968), p. 169.

socialist states is not left to the mechanism of a free market and is more than just an abstract economic concept. According to T.H. Silcock, economic development is a normative concept. As such, we have in view certain objectives such as growth in gross national product per capita, steady growth without large accelerations or decelerations, or a defined rate of growth in national income, we study the conditions which facilitate or prevent the accomplishment of these objectives. This normative approach is sensible because in economics we are studying a system of means and ends, and it is not sensible to pretend that we are not concerned about success or failure.<sup>1</sup>

At a 1961 OECD conference held in Washington, D.C., it was argued that investment in education facilitated economic development in two dimensions: by fostering technological innovations and by increasing the productivity of labour.<sup>2</sup> Mark Blaug put forward the idea that the formulation of the theory of human capital signalled "the 'birth' of the economics of education."<sup>3</sup> Such positions,

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<sup>1</sup>T.H. Silcock, "The role of Education in the Political and Economic Development of Southeast Asia," in D. Piper & T. Cole (eds.) Post-Primary Education and Political and Economic Development (Duke University Press, 1964), p. 200.

<sup>2</sup>See the proceedings of the conference reported in OECD, Policy Conference on Economic Growth and Investment in Education (Paris, 1962). Cited by J. Karabel & A. Halsey (eds.) in Power and Ideology in Education (New York, Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 308.

<sup>3</sup>J. Karabel & A. Halsey, ibid., p. 307.

however, presupposed that all the necessary and willing cooperation at all levels of government would be forthcoming. While, actually, such cooperation will usually be required to achieve maximum results of growth, the different economic and political institutions in a society interact with one another and may produce very different results. Indeed, in recent years, the theory of human capital has fallen into disfavour among policy-makers in the advanced Western nations.<sup>1</sup>

The change in economic-political orientations is also reflected in the sphere of education. As The China Quarterly, reviewing K.E. Priestley's work, stated:

No field of inquiry regarding Communist China is potentially more rewarding in terms of providing better clues to the regime's prospects for attaining its long-range political and economic goals than the study of the educational system which has evolved under Communist control....<sup>2</sup>

More significantly, however, the Chinese educational system reveals contradictions--contradictions between moral-political and economic goals. The post-Mao educational reform is essentially a response to another swing of the political pendulum to the economic side. Hence, study of the educational system of any country in terms of political ideology and economic goals is

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<sup>1</sup>See, for example, the proceedings of OECD conferences reported in Education, Inequality and Life Chances (OECD, Paris, 1975).

<sup>2</sup>K.E. Priestley, Education in China (Hong Kong: Dragonfly Books, 1962), before the title page.



of great relevance and merits our close attention. In fact, this study of ideology and economic development in relation to education systems has been the prime concern of many educational decision-makers and administrators, especially in the context of Third World countries such as Cuba and Tanzania.

## II. Significance of the Study

The present study is timely; it relates to a practical problem of future educational direction and the entire Chinese population, as well as the decision-making apparatus of the Party bureau. It also attempts to sharpen the definitions of some important political and educational concepts and relationships which have been and still are so puzzling to foreign observers. Thus, it hopes to fill a research gap found among Western "China scholars." This research gap centers on the role of ideology (political and economic) in the understanding of China's educational revolution.

No doubt, Western China-watchers have produced a considerable amount of literature attempting to explain the development of the Chinese revolution, but the bulk of these works, unfortunately, suffers from one or both of two deficiencies: "an excessive focus on the 'power struggle' in China's leadership group and/or an unwillingness to treat Marxism-Leninism seriously as a factor

in understanding the Chinese revolution."<sup>1</sup>

In a more general context, Rolland Paulston concluded that the existing studies on social and educational change failed to address themselves to two major inadequacies, among others,

- (1) As major reforms are always a partisan, political process implying redistribution of power, the lack of attempts to specify ideological, interest-group, and other conflicts means that most reform studies present a narrow, unsophisticated and largely 'technical' assessment of why and how reforms take place....
- (2) ...Few indeed are the studies that seek to specify culture-change components of reforms, and then assess the reform's effectiveness in securing the sought-after changes, or new cognitive and evaluational modes.<sup>2</sup>

To "bridge" these research gaps, Paulston suggested a methodology: "...if we are to gain greater insight into why and how educational reforms occur, I suggest that such gains will follow in large measure from a more sophisticated and insightful use of the dialectical method in all its variations."<sup>3</sup>

The present study on post-Mao educational reform tries to evaluate the two-line party struggle (radicals versus moderates) interpretation of educational reform in terms of the support

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<sup>1</sup>R. Levy, "Understanding China's Socialist Revolution--The Role of Ideology," in Modern China (October 1977), p. 489.

<sup>2</sup>Rolland Paulston, Conflicting Theories of Social and Educational Change (Pittsburgh: University Centre for International Studies, University of Pittsburgh, 1978), pp. 43-44.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 39

given by various leaders to different policies and at the same time examine the ideological roots of these different sets of positions in the hope of understanding the relationships between educational theory and practice.

### III. Scope and Limitation of the Study

The present study is mainly confined to exploring the post-Mao educational reform from a political and economic perspective. Preceding periods of China's education record are treated on a selective basis to furnish a proper context in which to appraise the continuity and discontinuity of the current educational transformation.

Apparently, the limitation of such a study clearly manifests itself in the collection of data because the line between genuine official policy declarations and mere ideological rationalizations often becomes indistinguishable. Nevertheless, the official announcements, taken at face value, must still be considered a useful point of departure for the study, at least, on a theoretical level.

Inevitable as they appear to be, the limitations of official announcements can be somewhat diminished by referring to secondary source materials such as press reports and travellers' tales, which help to sift out the true from the false. By and large, the official publications are inside sources of information and can be of more use if data are treated with due discrimination.

On the other hand, secondary source materials, indispensable as they sometimes are, suffer one serious limitation in the present work in that, to the best of the writer's knowledge, there has been hitherto little comprehensive and systematic study on post-Mao education, although there have been a number of articles and press reports dealing--sometimes only marginally--with education. Data in such materials are almost always fragmentary and elusive but, nonetheless, they exhibit considerable consistency and, therefore, can be utilized with reasonable confidence, particularly in relation to the updating of existing information.

With reference to the direction of future research efforts, it is suggested that a major task lies in exploring the political and economic substance of China's educational development record in a Third World perspective.

#### IV. Procedure

To be sure, the present attempt is prompted by the dramatic changes in the domain of education after Mao. Such changes, however, are not accidental but display a strong cause-and-effect relationship between the past and the present. As such, in terms of methodology, the historical research approach appears to be best suited to the purpose of the present work. As George Mouly has so aptly pointed out:

The foremost purpose of doing historical research is to gain a clearer perspective on the present. Present problems...are understandable only on the basis of their past....Historical research can provide us not only with hypotheses for the solution of current problems, but also with a greater appreciation of the culture and of the role which education is to play in the progress of society.<sup>1</sup>

In analysing the current educational reform on a political and economic basis, I try to incorporate the theories of Marx and Lenin, and the concepts of two-line party struggle into the analysis. It is hoped that such a synthesis can clarify the relevance of factors and create a more meaningful integration of various levels of the educational transformation.

The general procedures are:

(a) An examination of the dialectical process through which the new order is being worked out, that is: (1) criticism of the radical Maoist position on educational reform during and since the Cultural Revolution; (2) proposals for reform by the moderate veteran leaders; and (3) the implementation of reform and related contradictions.

(b) The present study is essentially a library research project, although other methods of data gathering are employed whenever circumstances permit. Source materials include periodicals, newspapers, and other concerned private, governmental, or professional and academic agencies. In addition, government policy proclamations in Peking are acquired indirectly from certain Chinese periodicals and

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<sup>1</sup>George J. Mouly, The Science of Educational Research (New York, American Book, Co., 1963), p. 204.

newspapers published in Hong Kong. Although there has been a continual supply of research literature, the bulk of it is slow in appearing.

(c) Available materials are evaluated in terms of credibility and relevance to the purpose of the study. Both primary and secondary sources are screened cautiously to ascertain their dependability.

(d) Findings are structured in accordance with the schema developed by way of the dialectical process as outlined in (a) above (p. 12).

## CHAPTER II

### SOCIALIST EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES AND EDUCATION IN CHINA

This chapter deals with educational ideology in China. The concept of education, including more-political socialization, is a broad topic and it is in this broad context that the present discussion is conducted. A parallel objective of this chapter is to examine the writings of Marx and Lenin themselves as they relate to education in an attempt to illustrate what Marxism-Leninism implies for education, as aim, method and content. It then proceeds to examine China's educational objectives in the light of this analysis.

On the view of the ideology in China, the state of confusion of thought, complicated by almost a century's loss of cultural direction, has been brought to a sudden conclusion with the adoption of Marxism-Leninism as the new state ideology which, though contrary to Confucian orthodoxy in every vital aspect, is equally convincing. As far as the ideological remoulding of the Chinese state constitutes the overriding objective of the Chinese Communist Party and government, education is cast into a framework of Marxism-Leninism. The pursuit of concrete national goals, however, requires an education which will go beyond the theories of Marx and Lenin and orient those who practice it towards the practical world of work. Hence, there can be identified two major dimensions in the study of Chinese education, namely, fundamental principles and actual implementation, that is, theory and practice.

Strictly, there is scarcely any literature of the Chinese Communist education that can be identified as educational theory as such. What the Chinese Communists have called educational theory, according to C.T. Hu, is no more than the extension and application of certain aspects of Marxism-Leninism, Stalinism, and Mao Tsetung Thought to the sphere of educational matters. Since socialist doctrine emphasizes the unity of theory and practice, as well as the importance of "concrete objective conditions," any educational policy or measure can be introduced and promoted or criticized and abandoned in the interest of either theory or practice. Or, a combination of both theory and practice is not an unusual compromise in the policy debate.<sup>1</sup>

There are, at least, five basic educational objectives that are of particular significance and relevance to China: (1) the proletarianization of society; (2) emphasis upon work as the defining characteristics of man; (3) emphasis upon the social and cultural bases of human development; (4) the attempt to unite theory and practice; and (5) the promotion of science and technology. In the present study, we shall refer to the first three objectives as moral-political, the remaining as intellectual.<sup>2</sup> In what follows,

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., C.T. Hu, Chinese Education Under Communism (Teachers College Press, Columbia University, New York, 1974), p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> This broad classification of the Chinese education into moral-political and intellectual is explained below; see Conclusions, pp. 41-42.



we shall discuss these five central themes of socialist education in terms of their philosophical, political and economic foundations, and then examine China's educational practice in the light of this analysis:

### I. The Proletarianization of Society

A socialist system in education is couched mainly in the ideas of Marx and Engels and their followers. Also important is a close consideration of education as part of modern social history where the phrase "dictatorship of the proletariat" is so familiar to us. Dictatorship is generally understood to be the opposite of democracy. Yet, it is often heard that, with or without formal democratic institutions, the capitalist class dictates in a capitalist society. The substitution of working-class power for capitalist class power is the dictatorship of the proletariat to the extent that this dictatorship means nothing other than the imposition of the will of the working class where still there is some other will to the contrary. The ratification of that will requires that widest, most direct participation of members and organizations of the working class. Thus, working-class power tends to bring about a democracy more complete than has hitherto been experienced since the advent of class society. It is, however, unwise to discount the possibility that the "Proletariat dictators", for all their merits, might emerge as a "new class" and painfully

extricate themselves from what Leszek Kolakowski has charged:

"The existing socialist societies are full of privileges of different kinds, not only in income, but in access to scarce goods, in education, in freedom, in prestige, in power."<sup>1</sup> Such, indeed, is a sad paradox and contradiction of socialist polity.

The implications of the proletarianization of society for education are that the teachers first and foremost have a responsibility, much greater than ever before, to be shared with parents, with fellow-workers and with their students. The essential direction of this responsibility is towards socialism and thence towards a classless, stateless communist society. Its objective is the preparation of today's children for their adequate participation in that history.

Lenin, after a conference on proletarian culture in 1920, drafted the following:

- (1) All educational work in the Soviet Republic of workers and peasants, in the field of political education in general and the field of art in particular, should be imbued with the spirit of the class struggle being waged by the proletariat from the successful achievement of the aims of its dictatorship, that is, the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of classes, and the elimination of all forms of exploitation of man by man.
- (2) Hence, the proletariat, both through its vanguard--the Communist Party--and through the many types of proletarian organizations in general should display the utmost activity and play the leading

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<sup>1</sup> Leszek Kolakowski & Stuart Hampshire (eds.), The Socialist Idea: A Reappraisal (Cox & Wyman Ltd., New York, 1974), p. 5.

part in all the work of public education.<sup>1</sup>

The next step towards the hegemony of the proletariat in education is the need to repel the "scornful" attitude towards physical labour. Khrushchev has made it quite clear when he stated:

One of the chief vices of the old social order was the gulf between physical and mental labour. The separation of mental from physical work was associated with the appearance of private ownership of the tools of production and the separation of society into hostile, antagonistic classes. The growth of the contradictions of capitalism further deepened the antithesis between mental and physical work. Marxist teaching dissipated the bourgeois legend of the inevitable and ever lasting existence, on the one hand, of the drab mass of people, whose lot is subordination and heavy physical toil, and, on the other, a handful of people who allegedly are destined by nature itself to think, to govern, and to develop science, literature, and art.<sup>2</sup>

If this is the promise held out by Marxist ideas, what is the Chinese reality? The Chinese leaders came to power with a Marxist-Leninist philosophy as a guiding principle to educational policies in the People's Republic of China. Under capitalism, according to Marxist theory, education, like other social institutions, is part of the superstructure of society; control of ideas and knowledge lay with the ruling class. As Marx underlined in the Communist Manifesto: "the ruling ideas of each age have ever

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<sup>1</sup>V.I. Lenin, "On Proletarian Culture," in Collected Works (Vol. 31, 1966), p. 316.

<sup>2</sup>George S. Counts (ed.), Khrushchev and the Central Committee Speak on Education (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1965), p. 33.

been the ideas of this ruling class."<sup>1</sup>

In the PRC, the official attitude toward education is that it must reflect the hegemony of the proletariat and its class interests.

Robert Barendsen has indicated in his study on Chinese education both the method and the orientation which the Chinese have adopted:

The Party leaders proceeded to apply some of the fundamental concepts of Marxism-Leninism to educational problems in order to work out general policy guidelines. One of their basic assumptions was that education and culture, as part of the "superstructure" of society, are mere reflections of the political-economic base and, as such, serve the interests of the dominant social class. Education for its own sake, or for the individual, was rejected as a naive notion. In a proletarian-oriented society, education must serve the proletariat.<sup>2</sup>

In old China, the intellectuals were the dominant class. In Socialist China, however, the intellectuals are morally obliged to integrate themselves with the working majority and be educated by them. Mao stated in 1968:

The majority or the vast majority of the students trained in the old schools and colleges can integrate themselves with workers, peasants and soldiers, and some have made inventions or innovations, they must, however, be re-educated by the workers, peasants and soldiers under the guidance of the correct line, and thoroughly change their old ideology. Such intellectuals will be welcomed by the workers, peasants and soldiers.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Marx-Engels, Selected Works, Vol. 1, p. 225. Quoted in David Lane, Politics and Society in the USSR (New York, 1970), p. 489.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Barendsen, Education in China: A Survey, (Washington D.C., Office of Education), p. 3. Reprint from Problems of Communism (Vol. XIII, No. 4), pp. 19-27.

<sup>3</sup> Peking Review, No. 49, December 1968, p. 24.  
People's Republic of China.

Mao believed that, in moulding a culture for the new China, education has a leading role to play if it was oriented towards the masses and adapted to China's moral as well as practical needs. The working class culture must dominate in all spheres of cultural activities.

## II. Emphasis on Work as the Defining Characteristic of Man

The image of man for the socialist is one that characterizes him as altruistic, cooperative, and efficient. Socialist belief holds that man and woman are together capable of achieving the best that is in them by serving the ideal of the state. Regarding work, according to Marx, it is the source of all value; the working class is the builder of socialism. Marx placed great stress on the role of labour in the educative process.

In the discussion of society, social relations, and the economic structure, Marx states that labour is, in the first place, a process in which both man and nature participated, and in which man on his own initiatives starts, regulates, and controls that material reactions between himself and nature. Marx continues:

We presuppose labour in a form that stamps it as exclusively human. A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his

structure in imagination before he erects it in reality.<sup>1</sup>

It follows, therefore, that man can be distinguished from animals by consciousness and the faculty to produce their means of subsistence. But this does not say that other animals do not work; only the use and making of instruments of labour is specifically characteristic of the human labour-process; hence, man is sometimes defined as a "tool-making animal."

Marx's idea of historical development of human society is interpreted in terms of a process of labour conceived as the production of material objects. Human nature and human self-creation is based upon two characteristics of man, as a tool-maker and a language-user.<sup>2</sup> In a different vein, Habermas distinguishes two aspects of human activity which are to a great degree derived from Marx's early work, namely, "labour" and "interaction", or "instrumental behaviour" and "communicative behaviour".<sup>3</sup> Thus understood, "human labour" in a broad sense, is the fundamental concept in the understanding of a relationship between society and nature as well as the defining characteristics of man.

In as early as mid-nineteenth century, in certain provisions of the Factory Acts of England which called for the alternation of work in school and work in factory, Marx saw the "germs of the education

<sup>1</sup>T. Bottomore & M. Rubel (eds.), Karl Marx: Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy (Watts and Co., 1956), p. 88.

<sup>2</sup>T. Bottomore, Marxist Sociology (London: MacMillan, 1975), p. 69.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 69-70.

of the future," in which "education and physical culture" would be combined with "manual labour," and "manual labour" with "education and physical culture."<sup>1</sup>

Of Chinese education, the most prominent feature in the formative years was the emphasis on "socially useful labour." Mao Tse-tung, like Marx before him, was primarily concerned with the smooth and early transition of the young people to the world of work dominated by the adult, as well as the responsibility characteristic of the peasant background in which he was himself brought up. Mao wrote in his letter of 7th May 1968:

While (students) 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.<sup>2</sup>

Again, Mao urged in his speech entitled "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People," (27th February 1957):

Our educational system must enable everyone who receives an education to develop morally, intellectually, and physically and become a worker with both socialist consciousness and culture.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Ronald Price, Marx and Education in Russia and China (Croom Helm, London, 1977), pp. 70-72.

<sup>2</sup> Translation in Current Background (U.S. Consulate General in Hong Kong), No. 888, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Mao Tse-tung, Four Essays on Philosophy (Peking, Foreign Language Press, 1966).

In January 1958, in the draft of "Method of Work," Mao went further and advocated:

As far as circumstances permit, all secondary vocational schools and skilled workers' schools should tentatively run factories or farms... Apart from carrying out production in their farms, all agricultural schools may also sign contracts with local agricultural cooperatives for participation in labour, and send teachers to stay in cooperatives for the purpose of integrating theory with reality....<sup>1</sup>

In the "Directions of the CCP and the State Council on Educational Work" issued on 19th September 1958, the following is stated:

Productive labour must be listed as a formal course in all schools. Every student must spend a certain period of time in manual labour in accordance with the rules. The campaign of hard work and thrifty study has now been universally launched. There are facts to show that provided productive labour is well led, it is of advantage ethically, intellectually, or physically to the students. This is a correct way of training new personnel of all-round development.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from the reference to "thrifty study" the document does not mention the economic implications of combining labour and education. But Mao Tsetung, while he does not view this as its main function, does not neglect it. Replying to a request from the Kiangsi Communist Labour College to commemorate their third anniversary, Mao wrote:

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<sup>1</sup> Current Background, No. 888, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> "Directive of the CCP and the State Council on Educational Work," Section Three, 19th September 1958.



I completely endorse your cause. Part-work and part-study, running schools through the practice of working while studying, does not cost the state a cent. There are primary schools, secondary schools and colleges dispersed in mountains throughout the province, and there are a few on the plain. Such schools are good indeed.

As Ronald Price has pointed out, Chinese educators have made distinctions between productive and socially useful labour. The former is in the very general sense purposive activity carried on for the production of "use value", or in the more limited sense of the production of objects for the purpose of consumption; the latter is the performance of services ranging from cleaning the school to guiding blind workers to and from work. Since all productive labour is, or at least should be, socially useful, and much service labour apparently produces use-values, though intangible, the distinction is often difficult.<sup>2</sup> What is required is an understanding of what is learnt from participation in different kinds of labour. "Learning may be categorized as moral-political, or intellectual, a term which will be used to include both the acquisition of understanding and of mental and manual skills."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Current Background, No. 888, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Ronald Price, Marx and Education in Russia and China (Croom Helm, London, 1977), p. 185.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

A majority of Mao's comments on labour and education apparently refer to the intellectual benefit to be derived from the combination. For instance, talking to a delegation of teachers from Nepal in 1964, Mao complained that "few people are for the new method, and more people are against it." He went on to say:

Tsinghua University has its workshops, and it is a plant of science and engineering. It won't do for its students to acquire only knowledge from books without working. However, it is infeasible to set up workshops for literature, history, economics or novels. The faculty of arts should take the whole society as its own workshop. Its students should contact the peasants and urban workers, industry and agriculture. Otherwise they are not much use in graduation.<sup>1</sup>

On the view of moral-political learning, work ethics are incorporated into the school curriculum and are being untiringly preached. The students must be brought to have a high spirit of duty to work; that is, they must be taught to abandon the fallacious notion of manual labour as a social stigma and they must be taught the necessity of work. As Khrushchev had underlined:

It must constantly be inculcated in the youth that the chief thing for society is that by which society lives, namely, productive labour because it creates material values.

More importantly, it trains students morally, politically, and intellectually. Work must be the major concern of every person in China--the slogan being "to serve the people."

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<sup>1</sup>Current Background, No. 989, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup>N. Khrushchev in Pravda, September 21st, 1958.

III. Emphasis on the Social and Cultural  
Bases of Human Development

Marx expands Aristotle's definition of man: "Man is in the most literal sense a zoon politikon, not merely a social animal, but an animal which can develop into an individual only in society." This definition has, at the same time, an ethical significance. Marx postulates the individuality and uniqueness of man as an end which can be attained only in society liberated from material and spiritual constraints--abundance of material production is necessary for socialism, so is the freedom of moral and intellectual aspects of life. Marx's theory of society and its existence in the natural world is based on the idea of a relationship between nature and society. Its fundamental concept is "human labour", conceived in a historical perspective. The most important of these relationships, between society and nature, or interactions between individuals are those taking place in the sphere of "material production," or in other words, the social process of human labour. Marx used the term "labour" in a very broad sense, so that it could be taken as roughly equivalent to human activity or the exercise of human creative power in general, whether in the development of material production, in the edification of social institutions, or in the creation of cultural objects.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See, e.g., T. Bottomore, Marxist Sociology (London: MacMillan, 1975), p. 70.

For Marx, man's social existence determines his consciousness:

It is men, who, in developing their material production and their material intercourse, change, along with this their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking.<sup>1</sup>

Human activity, as a social and historical process of development, is undertaken by individuals who are not differentiated by innate ability stemming from inherited characteristics. Socialist thinkers recognize that all men and women are equally educable. Any differences in performance which result from the students' exposure to the social and academic life of the community and the school are ascribed to differences in interaction with the environment. In fact, alter the environment and you alter the individual. Such also is the idea of Marx that "the rational control of environment, both natural and social, is an intellectual and moral aim of the highest importance for man."<sup>2</sup>

Finally, Marxism assumes a dialectic of man and his environment in which the individual personality is shaped by ongoing interplay of what he is with what he experiences. The alternation of this contradiction produces a qualitative change in the other. If mankind is to progress towards a communism like that envisaged by Marx the individual human being must increasingly come to understand and dominate this interplay.

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<sup>1</sup>Marx-Engels, Gesamtausgabe, Vol. I, pp. 15-17. Quoted in T. Bottomore & M. Rubel (eds.), ibid., p. 77.

<sup>2</sup>Bottomore & Rubel (eds.), ibid., p. 28.

What then does Marxist theory of society imply for Chinese education? Mao once told us that "It is man's social being that determines his thinking."<sup>1</sup> "Social being" changes from place to place and, especially, from city to country. Since the social being reflects variety and uniqueness, so does the thinking of one who is part of it. A teacher who involves himself in the life of a given area sufficiently thorough to know its features is engaging in social practice. His own thoughts are thereby remoulded. In brief, he no longer thinks of children in general; he thinks of children with specific cognitive localized vocabulary problems and knowledge needs, and particular attitudinal problems. His teaching approach is varied accordingly. The end result usually is spoken of as the resolution of a contradiction between desire to teach and those factors previously impeding success.<sup>2</sup>

Mao considered the resolution of the contradiction between man and nature to be derived from an understanding of dialectical materialism. In Mao's words:

In sum, the history of man comprises the history of his struggle with nature, the history of the class struggle, the history of science. Owing to the necessity to live and struggle, men have thought about the reality of matter and its laws, have proved the correctness of materialism, and have found the necessary intellectual tool for their struggle--materialist philosophy. The higher the level to which social

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<sup>1</sup>Mao Tsetung, "Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?" in Four Essays on Philosophy (Peking, Foreign Language Press, 1963), p. 134.

<sup>2</sup>See, e.g., Kuang-ming Jih-pao (Kuang-ming Daily), Peking, 3rd April, 1966.

production develops, the more scientific knowledge reveals the "secret" of nature, the greater the development and consolidation of materialist philosophy. Thus, man can be delivered gradually from the dual and crushing oppression of nature and society.

For Mao, the control of environment, both social and natural, depended on man and his will, and went through a dialectical process. As he stated:

Although we are determined by nature, we are also a part of nature. Hence, if nature has the power to determine us, we also have the power to determine nature; although our power is slight, one could not say that it is not without influence on nature.<sup>2</sup>

Mao believed that all problems could be tackled in terms of dialectical materialism and class struggle. Indeed, Mao's revolutionary education was based on such concepts.

Mao wrote in 1968:

In carrying out the proletarian revolution in education, it is essential to have working-class leadership;... The workers' propaganda teams should stay permanently in the schools and take part in fulfilling all the tasks of struggle--criticism--transformation in the schools, and they will always lead the schools.<sup>3</sup>

The concepts of dialectical materialism and class struggle are essential in understanding China's education. Equally important are the concepts of theory and practice, which have exerted tremendous impact on China's educational development and

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<sup>1</sup>Stuart R. Schram, The Political Thought of Mao Tsetung (New York, Frederick Praeger, Publisher, 1963), p. 124.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>3</sup>Cited by Yao Wen-yuan in The Working Class Must Exercise Leadership in Everything (Peking, 1968), p. xiii.

which we shall examine in the next section.

#### IV. The Attempt to Unite Theory and Practice

The socialist conception of the unity of theory and practice in education aims first and foremost at bringing the school closer to life, that is, making possible the widest possible application of "scientific" theories to everything of matter and mind. This idea of the merging of theory and practice has a central place in Marxist thought. Its origin can be traced back to discussions among the young Hegelians in the 1840s, and especially in a book published in 1838 by August Cieszkowski, "Prolegomena zur Historisophie."<sup>1</sup> Cieszkowski argued that as man had now attained, through Hegel's philosophy, Absolute Knowledge, the next stage in their development could only be the application of this knowledge in order to transform the world which is fraught with so much of social and natural uncertainties.<sup>2</sup>

Hegel's idea of Absolute Knowledge is, however, in Marx's own view, couched in "abstraction" and "intuition." In this regard, Marxist theory has developed in opposition to this idealist conception and method into an empirical science of society based upon the analysis of material modes of production. This practice, in more

<sup>1</sup>T. Bottomore, Marxist Sociology (London, MacMillan, 1975), p. 51.

2. Ibid.

general terms, includes the actual development of economic, social and political relationships, and has to be seen as exercising an influence upon theory, by posing new problems and by bringing into question some of the propositions which constitute, or are derived from, the theory. In short, the problem of the relation between theory and practice cannot be treated adequately from the theoretical side alone, but must be viewed also from the side of practice, taking account of the changes in theory that may be required by the development of social life in new forms, and by giving due importance to the empirical investigation of the socially and historically situated interconnection of theory and practice.

The problem--of the relation between theory and practice--has indeed been the subject of much heated debates among educators in socialist states since that idea has been introduced into the educational system. Lenin, like Marx before him, untiringly insisted upon the idea that theory should always be related to practice, to life. He criticized again and again the typical intellectual of old Russia who lived in a world of the mind divorced from the world of practical affairs and little interested in raising the productivity of the economy. It was this general condition among the intellectuals that led Lenin to emphasize repeatedly the necessity of bridging the gap between theory and practice, between mental and physical labour.<sup>1</sup> During the years immediately

<sup>1</sup>For a detailed discussion of the issue of monotekhnical versus polytechnical education, see Frederic Lilje, "Lenin and the Politics of Education," in Karabel & Halsey (eds.), Power and Ideology in Education (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 557-572.



following the Bolshevik seizure of power a heated controversy was carried on in the universities over the questions of knowledge for knowledge's sake, of science for science's sake, and of art for art's sake. The issue of prime concern of the academics at the time was whether the new Russia should cultivate pure science or science related to life. Subsequently, with the assistance of the Party, the proponents of the second positions prevailed in the debate.

The Chinese experience of unity of theory and practice also marked some of the most ferocious controversies over Mao's "Revolution in Education" during the Cultural Revolution in the late 1960s. Much of the debates among faculty members and students revolved around the extent and the manner in which theory and practice were merged without sacrificing one or the other. Unlike the Soviet controversy, which was then mainly a concern of economic viability, China's debate carried much of moral-political overtones, as Kiang Ching, Mao's widow, once remarked, "The more theory one has, the more reactionary one becomes." Thus far, the discussion about combining productive labour with academic study explains the aim of unity of theory and practice. In what follows, we shall turn to the methods which Chinese educators have adopted in an attempt to achieve that unity.

An analysis of the methods of integrating theory and practice in China must take as its starting point Mao's theory of knowledge outlined in "On Practice" (July 1937). There he describes the

the model that knowledge cannot be based solely on theoretical understanding. Knowledge begins with direct experience-- with practice--especially in production. The perception acquired through experience is then raised to the level of rational knowledge which ought to be tested and modified in practice. Dialectically, back and forth between theory and practice, knowledge is developed and refined. Mao concluded the essay:

Discover the truth through practice, and again through practice verify and develop the truth. Start from perceptual knowledge and actively develop it into rational knowledge; then start from rational knowledge and actively guide revolutionary practice to change both the subjective and the objective world. Practice, knowledge, and practice, and again knowledge. This form repeats itself in endless cycles, and with each cycle the content of practice and knowledge raises to a higher level.

More importantly, in this endless dialectic, true for both the individual and for the group, the essential practice is in the real world outside the school; through this very dialectic itself Mao expects the educators to find the right combination for today and for tomorrow when it comes.

The theses of practice and dialectics converge when the resolution requires "the concrete analysis of concrete conditions." It is this unity of theory and practice that underlies Mao's intellectual purpose of contact with the realities of society. As Mao wrote in 1965 with reference to the need of work experiences

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<sup>1</sup> Mao Tsetung, "On Practice", in The Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung (Vol. I, Peking, 1963), p. 308.

for the students of arts:

In order to remould the colleges of arts, students should be sent to the grassroots level to take up industrial, agricultural and commercial work....

Mao went further to say that "The liberal arts should take all society as their factory."<sup>2</sup> He expected that like the science and engineering colleges which have their own factories or establish contacts with local plants to enable teachers and students to link study with actual production, the liberal arts teachers and students, apart from class work, devote some time every year to taking part in "class struggle" and production labour in factory and people's communes, making social investigations and stressing theoretical study based on practice.<sup>3</sup>

In other words, where study is needed, teaching and learning materials are not confined to books. The "whole society educates." The responsibility is shared by farms, factories, industrial enterprises, the "mass campaigns," as well as the news media, and other media of communication. "Social investigations" by observation of social and political processes and by personal contacts with the masses is an integral part of education for life.

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<sup>1</sup>Current Background, No. 888, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup>Quoted in "Taking All Society as Their Factory: Peking University's Achievements in Educational Revolution in the Liberal Arts," in Peking Review, No. 5, February 2, 1973, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

## V. The Promotion of Science and Technology

Socialism, in Marx's view, is the result of the development of modern technology, and only socialism is able to use these results properly, to the advantage of mankind, by creating the "kingdom of freedom outside technology."<sup>1</sup> Marx believed:

In a higher phase of Communist society, after...the production forces have also increased with all-round development of the individual and all the springs of cooperative wealth flow more abundantly--only then can the narrow horizons of the bourgeois right be fully left behind....<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, socialism helps to reduce the "expenditure of effort" and improve the conditions of work, which then becomes increasingly "worthy of and adequate to human nature." As Michael Harrington put it: "Socialism seeks the abolition of compulsory labour. Its distinctive means of production is leisure."<sup>3</sup> Marx viewed socialism as a condition or factor of the creation of the "true kingdom of freedom." He also expected socialism to create the condition of abundance, by fully opening the sources of development of the productive forces, first of all by spurring technical progress; secondly, by realizing the moral values or "liberating

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<sup>1</sup>Włodzimierz Brus, "The Implication of Modern Technology for Socialism," in Kolakowski & Hampshire (eds.), The Socialist Idea: A Reappraisal (New York: 1974), p. 164.

<sup>2</sup>Karl Marx, The Critique of the Gotha Programme. Cited by W. Brus, op. cit., p. 166.

<sup>3</sup>Michael Harrington, "Leisure As the Means of Production," in Kolakowski & Hampshire (eds.), ibid., p. 161.

potential of technology....<sup>1</sup> Hence, Marx's vision of socialism and criticism of capitalism were based not only on ethical grounds, but also on grounds of economic efficiency.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, economic efficiency has been the supreme concern of many developing socialist states. Lenin, for example, recognizing that a Bolshevik minority, after the Revolution, was confronted with the problem of starvation, and then of underdevelopment generally, wrote in 1918:

The task that the Soviet Government must set the people in all of its scope is--learn to work. The Taylor system, the latest word of capitalism in this respect, like all capitalist progress, is a combination of the refined brutality of bourgeois exploitation and a number of the greatest scientific achievements in the field of analysing mechanical motions, the elaboration of correct methods of work, the introduction of the best system of accounting and control, etc. The Soviet Republic must at all cost adopt all that is valuable in the achievements of science and technology in this field...We must organize in Russia the study and teaching of the Taylor system and systematically try it out and adopt it to our own ends.<sup>3</sup>

Although Mao is not such a strong believer in modern science and technology as Lenin is, his distinctive approach to economic development is guided by his theory of dialectics.<sup>4</sup> As Stuart

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 158.

<sup>2</sup> Wlodzimierz Brus, ibid., p. 167.

<sup>3</sup> V.I. Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. XXVII, p. 259. Cited by M. Harrington, ibid., p. 157.

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., S. Schram (ed.), Authority, Participation and Cultural Change in China (Cambridge University Press, 1973), pp. 107-108.

Schram has pointed out: "in Mao's view, economic development is a spiral process in which successive increments in material and human resources combine and reinforce one another to produce a continual forward movement."<sup>1</sup>

It is no wonder, therefore, that socialist society has placed much emphasis upon science and technology in its educational planning, especially regarding higher education. It is from these two areas of study and research that socialist society draws its ever increasing cadres of specialists needed for development of its industrial resources. Marx had predicted that socialism, as a higher social and economic order, progressed under conditions of affluence, and his analysis of capitalist society led him to the conclusion that polytechnic education, as distinct from polytechnical training, could only be realized at a higher stage of social and economic development.

Since both industry and education come directly under government supervision it is possible for socialist society to control the number of specialists graduated by its institutions, and to "regulate" their employment upon graduation. It is, furthermore, possible to have the most recent research findings made available to industry, not only through making available a regular stream of recent graduates to every phase of the developing economy, but to ensure that techniques and processes are up-to-the-second by requiring every

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<sup>1</sup> S. Schram, Mao Tse-tung Unrehearsed: Talks and Letters, 1956-1971 (Penguin Books, 1974), p. 31.

scientist and technologist to concern himself some one or more practical problems in industry, agriculture, education or some part of the economy where his knowledge would be useful in improving processes.

The Chinese Communist Party has clearly inherited the Marxist-Leninist tradition in science and technology. In 1940, Mao stressed that "natural science is one of man's weapons in his fight for freedom."<sup>1</sup> In 1956, Chou En-lai underlined the urgent need to overcome the relative backwardness of Chinese science in circumstances in which "world science has made particularly great and rapid progress," and presented science as "a decisive factor in our national defence, economy and culture."<sup>2</sup> Again, Chou insisted that it was short-sighted not to realize that "without a foundation of theoretical research in science, there can be no basic improvements or reforms in techniques."<sup>3</sup> More recently, love of science has been treated as one of the "three loves" and scientific experimentation as one of the "three great revolutionary movements."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "Speech at the Inaugural Meeting of the Natural Science Research Society," (5 February 1940). Quoted in Robert Davies, "Socialism in a Less Developed Country," in OECD, Science and Technology in the PRC (Paris, 1977), p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Robert Davies, ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Chou En-lai, "Report on the Question of the Intellectuals," (January 14, 1956). Quoted in Robert Davies, ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Leo A. Orleans, An Economic Profile of Mainland China (Joint Economic Committee, Washington, 1967), p. 554.

In China in the 1960's, Marxism has certainly been assumed to be an essential framework for maximum success in the natural sciences in a socialist society. It is often heard that "Mao Tse-tung's thinking is the best guidance for revealing the secrets of science and technology."<sup>1</sup> Sometimes, this argument is put in an extreme form, as when in April 1965, the China Youth Newspaper argued that bourgeois scientists such as Newton, while imbued with spontaneous materialism, "constantly bog down in the mire of idealism," so that it is "totally senseless" in the socialist era of the 20th century to regard Newton as an example.<sup>2</sup>

One distinctive feature of the Chinese Marxist approach to science was the insistence during the Cultural Revolution on the role of the masses in "open-door" scientific experimentation, and on "people's science." Chinese Marxists in 1952-1974 appeared to have stressed that they were living in an age of "technological revolution" or on the "eve of a new revolution in science, technology and industry."<sup>3</sup>

There are three very broad guiding principles that seem to have been accepted by the Chinese authorities as crucial to a socialist economy in its drive to overcome backwardness.<sup>4</sup> First, the most

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Text translation in Survey of China Mainland Press (U.S. Consulate General in Hong Kong), No. 3443, 1965. Cited by Robert Davies, ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Robert Davies, ibid., p. 192.

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., Robert Davies, ibid., p. 192.



advanced modern technology must be utilized, and to ensure this the sluggishness of professional technologists must be overcome. Here, in China, the long-run goal of advanced large-scale technology as a major support of industrialization has never seriously been lost sight of, though during the Cultural Revolution a public atmosphere was allowed to develop in which native technology was stressed and the importance of advanced foreign technology was deemphasized.

It must be pointed out, however, that Mao himself "is not opposed to progress and economic development, but concerned lest they produce, in China, the negative effects engendered elsewhere by urbanization and industrialization."<sup>1</sup> As the Hung Chi (Red Flag) editorial (1 January 1967), urging the extension of the Cultural Revolution into the economy, cautioned:

Some muddle-headed people counterpose the revolution to production and think that once the great Cultural Revolution starts it will impede production....These comrades have not thought through the question of what is the purpose of farming, of weaving, of steel-making? Is it for building socialism, or is it for building capitalism?<sup>2</sup>

The second guiding principle, at least in the early stages of scientific development, has been that advanced technology should be imported on a large scale from foreign countries. In China, these

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<sup>1</sup>Stuart Schram (ed.), Mao Tse-tung Unrehearsed: Talks and Letters, 1967-1971. (Penguin Books, 1974), p. 29.

<sup>2</sup>Dick Wilson, Antony of China: An Introduction to One Quarter of Mankind (A Mentor Book, 1969), p. 167.

borrowings from abroad were viewed as a transitional stage leading gradually to self-reliance of science and technology.

The third principle has been Mao's concept of mass-line policy in scientific experimentation as a distinctive mode of socialist modernization.

## VI. Conclusions

In a broad sense, we refer to the first three socialist educational objectives as moral-political learning (See pp. 16, 20 and 25), the remaining two as intellectual learning (see pp. 30 and 35). But, it is necessary to point out that while China's educational aims and method can be dichotomized as such, there is, nonetheless, a certain degree of conceptual unity within all of them. Thus, when we refer to the teaching of science and technology as intellectual learning, we also imply the moral-political values to be derived from such a liberal education.

The unity of theory and practice will continue to receive attention in post-Mao China as an intellectual concept. But, it is likely that practice will be deemphasized or even eliminated from the school curriculum if it impedes the pursuit of theory, as of science and the humanities.

Since Mao's revolutionary education focuses attention on politics and morality and the current reform on technology and merits, we feel justified in the present study to classify China's educational system into moral-political or intellectual, as the cases may be. By focussing on the categorization in this particular way, the present study tries to examine the conflicts within the ideology--conflicts between moral-political and economic goals sought by the two competing leadership factions for having the more "acurate" interpretation of the ideology.

For analytical purposes in the ensuing discussions, we shall continue to describe the post-Mao educational orientation as either moral-political or intellectual depending on which one of the two dimensions that prevails in the policy debate.

## CHAPTER III

### THE IMPACT OF THE GANG OF FOUR ON EDUCATION

#### I. Radicalism Versus Moderation

With the rapid elimination of the so-called Shanghai Gang of Four<sup>1</sup> on 6th October 1976 as a radical political force following the passing of Mao, the new leadership has embarked upon a series of ambitious programmes for the modernization of China in the next decade or so, not the least of which is the reform of education to meet the demands of economic development.

The present chapter is an attempt to examine the alleged "educational crimes" of the Gang of Four and their implications for educational development in the post-Mao era. A parallel objective is to clarify two concepts--"radical" and "moderate" -- as they are most often used about China in the West, especially among journalists.

For the educationalists, the main concern of the downfall of the Gang of Four centers upon why and how the incident would bring about educational changes in China; to what extent the

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<sup>1</sup>The Gang of Four, who rose to power in Shanghai during the Cultural Revolution, are leaders of the "radical" faction within China's political leadership until their purge in October 1976. They are: Chiang Ching, Mao's wife and Politburo member; Chang Chun-chiaa, member of the Politburo's Standing Committee and Leader of the army's Political Department; Yao Wen-yuan, Politburo member and prominent radical theoretician; and Wang Hung-wen, Party Vice-Chairman and member of the Politburo's Standing Committee.

rectification of the excesses perpetuated by the radicals would foster educational reorientations laying greater emphasis on academic excellence or modifying the revolutionary features of the Maoist mass line. All these questions will be examined in greater detail in the chapters that follow. Apparently, as long as the Gang of Four is out of power, any "revolutionary exploits" that are identified with the Gang or under their auspices will be put away for the moment. What now confronts the new leadership will be both a challenge and an opportunity to work out a compromise between the radical revolutionary line and the moderate pragmatic line.

It is interesting to note that it was Mao who initially gave the name Gang of Four to the four Politburo members. This Gang of Four represents radical Maoism in its purest form. No doubt, it is a complicated task to analyse the political controversy between the radicals and the moderates, between two alliances with competing ideological values and policy dispositions. It is equally difficult to describe sufficiently the differences and similarities between the two groups without in the first instance defining the meaning of the two concepts--radical and moderate--in the Chinese context. This is especially true because the terms easily conjure up misleading comparisons with similar characteristics in Western political thought. As Fox Butterfield has pointed out:

They are misleading. The bureaucrats are not moderates in American terms. They were professional revolutionaries, who shared the rigors of the Long March with Mao and shared his commitment to building China into a socialist state. But they disagreed on the method, preferring orderly administration and careful planning to endless campaigns....As for the radicals--the Maoists were not radical in the sense of espousing the cause of those in China who had grievances against the system....The Maoists believed, with Confucius, that man's moral goodness must come before his mere economic betterment. They shared the traditional belief in China's superiority and the lack of need for outside technology or foreign trade. And they accepted the old view that music, the arts and literature should serve the state. The Maoists did differ, though, in their belief in (and the methods of achieving) equality.

The moderates and the radicals can best be distinguished by the relative priorities they accorded political ideology, education, and economic policy. Ideologically, the moderate identifies with some sort of "classical" Marxism, stressing historical determinism, "uninterrupted revolution," an incremental, linear progression toward socialism rather than violent, wave-like revolution characterized by class struggles and the Maoist concepts of "continuous revolution."<sup>2</sup> In short, revolutionary fervour ought not to transgress beyond "objective conditions." On the other hand, the radicals tend to stress the need to continue the revolution and believe strongly that mass line is the only "correct"

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<sup>1</sup> Fox Butterfield, "More Moderate Policies for China Indicated in the Wake of Antileftist Campaign," in The New York Times, 22 October, 1976, pp. A1, A8. For a discussion of the Maoist moral-political values, see Chapter II, pp: 14-43.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of Mao's theory of "Uninterrupted Revolution" and "Continuous Revolution", see Asian Survey, No. 9, 1978, pp. 912-933.

line and even political turbulence will be desirable to achieve the ideals of egalitarianism. In this respect, the radicals seem to reflect Karl Marx's early thinking. For Marx, "To be radical is to grasp things by the root. But for man the root is man himself."<sup>1</sup>

The Chinese radicals also accord with idealism, stress human relations in the context of class contradiction and struggle, subjective factors of the superstructure, and the role of man and his physical and spiritual power in social transformation. Perhaps the most prominent characteristics of the radicals are their "uncompromising denial and rejection of existing reality."<sup>2</sup> The radicals' belief in dialectical materialism lead them to favour class struggle and reject the development of institutional authority and bureaucratic rule. Instead, they tend to achieve their political goals by mass mobilization, which they think is the strongest political weapon but also the most potentially dangerous one to authorize. For instance, the Red Guards, the vanguard of the "revolutionary masses" during the Cultural Revolution, were rampant and on the loose. They were encouraged to challenge the authority of the alleged "capitalist-roaders" within the Party. The mass movement, however, quickly degenerated

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<sup>1</sup>T. Bottomore (ed.), Karl Marx: Early Writings (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Robert C. Tucker, The Marxian Revolutionary Idea (New York: Norton, 1969), p. 182.



into anarchic gang wars, vandalism, and willful killings. No wonder, the radical position was not particularly popular among the masses of labouring people, but was rather attractive to students for the defiance of authority and the temporary delegation of political power. On the other hand, the radicals' emphasis on moral-political values rather than material rewards can easily be interpreted as being unconcerned about the livelihood of the populace and has thus lost their support when it is most needed.

With reference to education, the radical position is that elitist education is to be denounced; the revolutionary educational line is mass oriented and "open-door." The radicals are hostile to knowledge for its own sake, education for its own sake, art and literature for their own sake; all intellectual pursuit must be guided by politics and production. As a result, academic studies must be combined with their actual applicability. They emphasize the unity of theory and practice in education. The study of basic theory must be within the framework of political and the economic struggle. With their emphasis on work experiences, the period of schooling is shortened and courses of study reduced. All sorts of formal examinations are regarded by the radicals as an instrument against the workers and the peasants and therefore should be eliminated. Full-day study is to be denounced because it tends to tax the student's mind and separate him from physical labour. Full-day students must be required to take part in production

and political activities. What is more important is that intellectuals must be re-educated through manual labour and integrate themselves with the workers and peasants. They ought to understand that all educational and cultural pursuit invariably serves the interests of the proletariat rather than their personal advancement. In this sense, intellectuals are morally and politically obliged to educate the masses of people to become a new force of intellectual proletariat to carry socialist revolution through to the ultimate conclusion.

The moderate position on education, on the other hand, tends to stress an elitist and meritocratic approach, which is designed to strengthen economic growth and hence the power of the state and the security of those who rule it. In this context, Joan Robinson's comment on the moderate position is the most illustrative:

It was something like this: Mao's ideas were fine for leading a peasant army but they are not appropriate to running a modern state. The Great Leap of 1958 was an irresponsible adventure, for which a heavy price was paid in the three bad years that followed....

The Rightists insist upon the need for organization and authority. Every army and every industry in the world is run on the basis of a chain of command from the top downwards. That those in a higher grade in the hierarchy should have a more comfortable standard of life than those below is not only excusable but desirable, since it adds prestige to authority. The workers need tutelage; obedience and diligence are required of them; they are none the better for having their heads full of political wind. The task of industrialization must be carried out fast. It is nonsense to wait till the mass of the population are educated. We must build up a crop of managers and civil servants quickly; that means we must draw upon the old lettered class, even if they were landlords

or reactionaries in the past. In the arts, the dominance of politics produces a dreary philistinism and in literature a stupid black and white morality, smothering all the subtlety and grace of Chinese traditions.<sup>1</sup>

The moderates recognize that intellectual development is an objective of education: Systematic learning with articulated grades and levels in curricular materials is more heavily emphasized. Perhaps, the most attention that the moderates would give to education is higher education, the quality of which is protected by a system of formal examinations. Some inequalities in higher learning would be tolerated in the event of enrolling only the best qualified intellectually and politically to the universities. "Two kinds of education" and "two types of labour", which were attacked by the radicals, are acceptable to the moderates. The teaching of science and technology is perhaps the most important task in school. As a result, the role of intellectuals in education and Revolution is highly recognized and their dedication to education is a decisive factor in the modernization of China, as emphasized by the moderates. The anti-foreign position of the radicals is to be rectified. What is more important is to learn from foreign technology, adopt, and create to serve China's needs. Also, international academic and scientific exchanges are more heavily stressed by the moderates.

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<sup>1</sup>Joan Robinson, The Cultural Revolution in China (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1969), pp. 16-17.

In economic terms, the moderates believe greater institutional and political stability to be preconditions for rapid and sustained economic development, and are willing to accept a certain degree of social and economic inequality for the sake of economic efficiency. The moderates' system of enterprise management is one of personal responsibility under the Party committee's leadership and not one in which politics are in command and executive responsibility is widely diffused. The socialist principle for the moderates is "contributing according to ability" and "receiving according to work." Considerable wage differentials and material incentives are needed as motivational forces for hard and bitter work. Piece-rate payments and bonuses would contribute to this objective. As Korbash has pointed out: "Men have never developed and will never develop production for moral reasons alone, but will always be impelled to do so chiefly by material interests."<sup>1</sup> What is more important for the moderates are the forces of production and material means of production with an objective economic base.

The radicals, on the other hand, stress the need to "contique the revolution" to promote production, as exemplified by the Tachai model of agriculture.<sup>2</sup> In policy terms, the radicals tend to rely

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted in John Gurley, "The Dialectics of Development: USSR Versus China," in Modern China Vol. 4, No. 2, April, 1978, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup>For a discussion of the Tachai mass line in agriculture, see, e.g., Mitch Meisner, "Dazhai: The Mass Line in Practice," in Modern China, Vol. 4, No. 1, January 1978, pp. 27-61.

economic progress not on the level of development reached by the productive forces as a whole but on man, and on his physical and spiritual powers. They turn to a "willful transformation" by mass campaigns of their thoughts and institutions for the breakthrough necessary to achieve radical and immediate growth of their productive forces. The radicals overstress subjective factors and so to this extent neglect the steady and direct effort required to strengthen their productive forces.<sup>1</sup> Besides, they consciously foster instability in the process of economic development by class struggles and big jumps, "a reflection of their subjectivist tendencies and they try to make an 'objective law' out of such irregularities, that is, a socialist law out of their homemade crises."<sup>2</sup> As regards material incentives for workers and peasants, the radicals overstress the power of moral-political appeals and their negation of the role of scientists and experts is not conducive to economic development.

While both the moderates and the radicals believe in the desirability of both development and quality, they differ in the priorities they assign to these sometimes competing goals. They resolve the contradictions between "revolution" and production in different ways. As Peter Moody has pointed out: "The question is not whether to modernize, but how to modernize: Look at the United

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<sup>1</sup>John Gurly, op. cit.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

States and Russia; they are modern, but not quite what is wanted."<sup>1</sup> Either the radical faction or the moderate faction finds support among central leaders, provincial officials, local cadres, military officers, and the masses of ordinary people. It is likely, for example, that the moderates include not only veteran party cadres at both the central and provincial levels, but also many skilled workers and intellectuals.

In Peking, the most assertive proponent of the moderate cause is, no doubt, Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping while the radical alliance is represented by the Gang of Four. At this point, it is necessary to point out that while Mao is usually identified with the radical position, a distinction between radicalism and Maoism should be made because Mao, during the last years of his life, was not clearly identified with the radicals, but instead sought to balance radicals against the moderates to create a synthesis that preserve the best features of both.<sup>2</sup> In fact, Maoism, with its emphasis on egalitarianism and search for national wealth and power, will continue to be attractive to many in China, not only to those who are near the bottom of the socioeconomic and political hierarchies but also to many intellectuals and officials who believe in the Maoist ideals.

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<sup>1</sup>Peter R. Moody, Jr., "The Fall of the Gang of Four: Background notes on the Chinese Counterrevolution," Asian Survey, No. 8, August 1977, p. 714.

<sup>2</sup>For a discussion of Mao's relationship to radicalism, see e.g., Peter R. Moody Jr., op. cit., p. 716.

## II. The Problem of Intellectuals: An Overview

To put the post-Mao educational reform in a proper and full perspective, it is necessary to examine the impact of the Gang of Four that their radical exploits have caused during the Cultural Revolution. It is, indeed, a response to the excesses of the revolutionary education that the new leadership led by Chairman Hua Kua-feng has embarked on a series of new measures aimed at debunking some of the Gang of Four's educational innovations.

Apparently, the Gang of Four's "two-estimates" is the most controversial issue in relation to the problems of intellectual education and the role of intellectuals in Chinese Revolution, as in that of post-Revolution Russia. The overturn of the "two-estimates" is regarded by the new leadership as a necessary prerequisite for any social progress in China, especially for educational development.<sup>1</sup> The "two-estimates" (a phrase that could be better understood as "appraisals" or "assessments") refers to the view: (1) that in the seventeen years (1949-1966), Mao's proletarian line "was in the main not implemented" and "revisionist line dominated" and (2) that the majority of the intellectuals, including teachers and students, trained during this period, were

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<sup>1</sup>See, e.g., "A Great Debate on the Educational Front-- Repudiating the Gang of Four's 'two-estimates'," in Peking Review, No. 51, December 16, 1977, pp. 409. Also, "Seize the Key Point to Rectify Education: Advance on the Momentum of Victory," in Jen-min Chiao-yu (People's Education), Peking, No. 1, 31 January, 1978, pp. 3-6.

"basically bourgeois in their world outlook," were "bourgeois intellectuals" and even that they belonged to the "stinking ninth" category of class enemies (after landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements, Rightists, renegades, enemy agents, and capitalist-roaders).<sup>1</sup> An article in Hung Chi (Red Flag, No. 12, 1977) by the mass criticism group of the Ministry of Education systematically refutes these assessments, which was said to have been made in 1971 by Chih Chun, a close follower of the Gang of Four.<sup>2</sup>

According to the article, Mao himself is reported to have refuted them in the summer of that year, saying, among other things, that:

Under the dictatorship of the proletariat, only a small section of people, not the overwhelming majority, have followed the erroneous line. The majority of the intellectuals support the socialist system. Only a small number of them have followed the feudal, capitalist and revisionist line. Teachers should be respected as teachers. Don't criticize them whenever they say something wrong. Is it possible to be correct all the time? It doesn't matter if they say something incorrect, something wrong. Let people discuss it together. How is it possible to speak correctly about everything all at once? Impossible!<sup>3</sup>

The article argues that this was Mao's basic assessment of the situation in the field of education and the situation regarding the intellectuals, and that the Gang of Four blinded

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<sup>1</sup> Peking Review, op. cit.

<sup>2</sup> Translation, op. cit.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 5.



the people from Mao's instructions. Refuting the Gang's charge that "the revisionist line dominated," the article also quotes Chou En-lai as saying in 1971 that "Chairman Mao's red line has illuminated the educational front too; the great majority of the intellectuals accept the leadership by the Communist Party and work in the interest of socialism."<sup>1</sup>

Again, the article quotes Mao's 1964 observation that the general line in educational policy was correct, but the methods were not right, and there should be some reforms. (Later, during the Cultural Revolution, he strengthened this to call for education to be revolutionized). It argues that the tendency in some schools to divorce education from reality, from labour and from politics, was attributable to the small number of people who followed Liu Shao-chi's line. One should not jump to the conclusion that "Mao's line in education was in the main not implemented" simply because he had said that "there should be some reforms in education" and "education should be revolutionized." It rejects the Gang's argument that it was a proof that Mao's line was not implemented in the 17 years (1949-1966) because he had criticized the workers in education before the Cultural Revolution. One should not ignore Mao's observation that "the policy and line in education are correct, but our methods are improper." The improper methods include: "the period of schooling was too long, the courses of study were too

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

heavy and the teaching method was not suitable, while in examinations the students were treated like enemies, often taken by surprise by the teachers who deliberately tested them by asking queer questions."<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, the article points out that in 1971 there were 20 million intellectuals, the majority of whom were from worker or peasant families and had grown up in New China. Most of them supported the socialist system, and leadership in the educational field was mainly in the hands of such people. Mao had said in 1957:

Most of our present intellectuals come from the old society and from families of non-working people. Even those who come from workers' or peasants families are still bourgeois intellectuals because the education they received before liberation was a bourgeois education and their world outlook is fundamentally bourgeois.<sup>2</sup>

Such people (who in 1957 were estimated to number 5 million) could--and most did--change. As Mao had later said:

To be red, they must make up their minds thoroughly to transform their bourgeois world outlook. They don't have to read a lot of books, what they must do is to get a true understanding of the following questions: What is the proletariat? What is the dictatorship of the proletariat? Why is it that the proletariat alone has great promise while the other classes are all in transition? Why must our country take the socialist road and not the capitalist road? Why is the leadership of the Communist Party indispensable?<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p.8.

Indeed, Mao added:

...To transform one's bourgeois world outlook and to be a proletarian intellectual is not an unattainable goal. The fundamental question concerning world outlook is one of whom should we serve....<sup>1</sup>

In view of the fact that in 1957 there were about five million or so intellectuals whose world outlook was basically bourgeois, Mao stressed the need for the intellectuals to remould their world outlook. In this connection, the Gang of Four was accused of applying this analysis to the situation in 1971 in total disregard of its essence and the specific time, place and conditions in which it was made in 1957.

Hua Kuo-feng stated in his speech at the 11th National Congress of the CCP:

The great majority of China's present-day intellectuals have made progress in varying degree in transforming their bourgeois world outlook into proletarian outlook, the process of gradually acquiring and consolidating the latter.<sup>2</sup>

For Hua, the methods are "uniting with, educating and remoulding the intellectuals" and "respect teachers, love students." This is necessary, for the state and Party leadership under Hua Kuo-feng is not content with numerous campaigns and stimuli for increasing production and raising discipline. Such actions can easily be supported by Mao's quotations and are part of the system. A step which goes beyond that, a fundamental step, is the rehabilitation

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<sup>1</sup> Hung Chi (Red Flag), ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Peking Review, op. cit., p. 8.

of the intellectuals. With it, Hua touches the structure of Chinese society.

This renewed emphasis on the role of the intellectuals in China explains why people working with their minds have now so quickly recovered a place in Chinese society. Nevertheless, it also indicates a considerable departure from Mao's revolutionary values of the proletarianization of society, in favour of an alternative which is more academic and pragmatic.

### III. From "Reversal of Verdicts" to Proposals of Reform

Any study of post-Mao education would be incomplete unless we gave due consideration to the role of Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping in the development of China's education. Ever since the Cultural Revolution, especially after his second return to the Party leadership in early 1977, Teng has been the most assertive proponent of a growth-oriented education, and, not surprisingly, the arch-enemy of the Gang of Four in the "two-line" struggle in education and in many other spheres.

Presently, Teng is apparently entrusted with the stupendous task of carrying the educational work through to the end. His first conference on the comprehensive national educational work in the post-Mao era was convened in Peking on 22nd April 1978. Another national education conference has been scheduled for next

year. Before we proceed with the discussion of the many and various new measures introduced by the new leadership, an attempt will be made to examine Teng's part in the current transformation of Chinese education in the hope that we may better understand the cause-and-effect relationships in the "politics" of education and hence put the integration of various levels of China's educational development in a full and proper perspective.

Some important documentation has been published in the Chinese press since the second purge of Teng Hsiao-ping in April 1976 regarding policies which he pursued during the preceding year. No doubt, such documentation is partial and fragmentary, but it does throw new light on recent events. In particular, the source strongly hints that Teng launched an attack in 1975 against what he regarded as widespread tendency of ultra-Leftism, especially in the Party, in education, and industry, and that anti-Teng struggle in Spring 1976 was therefore not accidental. Whether the policies advocated by Teng amounted to "restoring to capitalism," and whether the contradictions between the radical Maoist line and the moderate revisionist line was in fact "antagonistic," will be examined in greater detail in the chapters that follow. The fact now is that Teng, the third person in command in post-Mao China, has been and still is the central figure in the twists and turns in recent events.

In the first half of 1976, at a time when the Maoist radicals exerted a dominating influence on the central leadership in Peking, the Chinese Communist theoretical journal Hung Chi (Red Flag) started its May edition with a set of quotes from Mao Tse-tung. Among these one can find the following "verdict" of the late Chairman on Teng Hsiao-ping:

He does not understand Marxism-Leninism, he represents the capitalist class. He said he will 'never reverse the verdicts', this cannot be trusted....This man does not comprehend class struggle, he has never raised this link.

It was only five months later (6th October 1976) that the Gang of Four was purged by the moderate veteran leaders. Despite this, the Party newspaper in Canton, while praising the new leader Hua Kuo-feng, still charged:

Since the winter of last year and this year's Spring, Chairman Mao gave several important instructions, and 'led the people of the whole country to wage the struggle of criticizing Teng and counterattacking against the rightist storm of verdict reversal'.<sup>2</sup>

On 23rd July 1977, however, the Party organ People's Daily published the communique of the conference of the 10th CCP Central Committee, in which it was said:

The plenary meeting unanimously decided to restore Comrade Teng Hsiao-ping to his position as member of the CCP Central Committee, member of the Central Committee's Politburo, member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, Vice-Chairman of the Central Committee, Vice-Chairman of the Central Committee's Military Commission, Vice Premier of the State Council, and Chief of General Staff.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hung Chi (Red Flag), No. 5 May 1976, pp. 1 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Canton Daily, November 24, 1976.

<sup>3</sup> Jen-min Jih-pao (People's Daily), July 23, 1977.

Moreover, the Communique did not mention that there had been any "self-criticism" on Teng's part. Obviously, the reversal of this particular verdict of 1976 was unconditional and absolute.

Considering that only fifteen months had elapsed between April 1976 when Teng was purged and July 1977, this represents a dramatic change. And indeed, developments since October 1976 have drastically altered the course of Chinese domestic politics. Hua Kuo-feng himself marked out this change in his political report to the 11th Party Congress of the CCP on August 12, 1977, when he declared: "With the smashing of the Gang of Four as a symbol, our country's first Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which lasted for eleven years, is herewith pronounced as victoriously completed."<sup>1</sup>

If one attempts to appraise the significance of Teng's rehabilitation for the development of China's education, it is necessary to look for indications of the debate on education since the Cultural Revolution and especially the events in 1975. On the basis of this inquiry, one may proceed to discuss about the prospects of China's educational development.

A necessary, but probably not sufficient, explanation of the debate on education of 1975-1976 would be based on an interpretation of the events since the 4th National People's Congress in January 1975.

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<sup>1</sup> Peking Review, No 35, 26 August 1977, pp. 6-64.

when Premier Chou En-lai delivered his national economic plan aimed at taking China to the end of the present century. This interpretation would focus on Teng Hsiao-ping's rise and his charge to implement the "four modernizations" called for by Chou.

Teng's approach to implementation included the initiation of a critical evaluation of China's science system during the summer of 1975. This has come to be known as the "Outline of the Summary Report on the Work of the Chinese Academy of Science."<sup>1</sup> Teng apparently felt that the key to the achievement of China's development goals lay with a greatly enhanced effort in science and technology. For Teng, science and technology should be thought of as direct productive forces. Teng therefore felt justified in altering many of the Cultural Revolution reforms in science and technology, higher education, and industrial management. The radical response to Teng's initiatives came in the last quarter of 1975, and was initially a defence of Cultural Revolution reforms in education. By early 1976, the radical reaction was extended to science itself in the focussed discussion. With reference to both education and science, Teng and his supporters were accused of creating a "right deviationist wind to reverse the verdicts" of the Cultural Revolution.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See, e.g., John Gittings, "New Material on Teng Hsiao-ping," in The China Quarterly, No. 67, 1976, p. 492.

<sup>2</sup>See, e.g., China Reconstructs, June 1976, pp. 6-11.



Teng is supposed to have master-minded the criticisms of the Maoist policies in education which gathered way in the summer of 1975. These were led by the Minister of Education Chou Jung-hsin, and supported by a small group in the Party Committee at Tsinghua University. Teng had the serious charge that the revolution in education has resulted in a state of educational crisis. He attacked Mao's instruction about enrolling students from among workers, peasants, and soldiers, saying that reliance on them could only be relative; that their quality as students was not as good as that of students in technical schools in the past. The educational revolution had resulted in universities and colleges only doing practice, practice and practice again without theory. Agriculture was the business of agricultural colleges, and has nothing to do with universities; more time and energy should be devoted to theoretical studies, and it was up to universities and colleges to decide whether they were able to run varied forms of open-door schooling--if not, it was not necessary. These criticisms aroused the fury of the radicals who soon launched a campaign against Teng's ideas. The attack and criticisms continued after Teng's second fall from power until the passing of Mao Tse-tung in early September. They were resumed briefly after Mao's passing, but then virtually ceased after the purge of the Gang of Four in the following October.

The policy options of China's education tend to be related to and derived from the broader pattern of national politics — resulting from competition among political alliances. Thus, the pendulum-like development of Chinese education since the Great Leap Forward (1958-1959) has usually been provoked by some alteration in the balance of power, and not surprisingly it does appear that a swing in the pendulum from the far left to the right is already underway. We are now hearing the other side of the issues which made up the debates and controversies of 1966-1978. Notably, a new enrolment system for higher education has been declared,<sup>1</sup> an apparently pragmatic stance on educational matters revealed,<sup>2</sup> and programs for a "hundred flowers" type liberalization also spelled out.<sup>3</sup>

In one sense then, by knowing the policy preferences of those who occupy national leadership, one can explain the direction of education policy. To the extent that the leadership is secure, one might expect much of the "politics" of education to disappear. Such an explanation, however, would be incomplete in the light of past experience of Mao's revolutionary education which has exerted such a profound impact on people's minds that it would not be completely written off. Rather, it appears that a convenient

<sup>1</sup> Peking Review, No. 46, November 1977, pp. 16-18.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., No. 2, January 1978, pp. 15-19.

<sup>3</sup> "Hundred Flowers," Part 2, Time Magazine, March 13, 1978, pp. 32-33.

measure of the legacy of past development and the patterns of commitments which make up prior institutionalization will continue to influence the new leaders in their policy options. The existence of such factors calls for a more detailed explanation of the interactive relationships between broad policy initiatives stemming from the political leaders at all levels, and the concrete realities of the educational practice.

It is likely that policy priorities among the new leaders will remain as problems and cause of conflicts. Thus, while the "two-line" struggle in education as we have known it may pass into history, it seems unlikely that the politics of education will disappear even though disputes are nothing more than just disagreements among the leaders with a common objective rather than the bitter and violent confrontations of the Cultural Revolution.

Against this background, our objectives of the following chapters are set to describe and analyse those new measures in the field of education as far as the Chinese press has hitherto allowed us to see. By doing so, we hope to discover the continuities and discontinuities of Mao's educational line, and the problems associated with the implementation of reform undertaken by the new leadership.

## CHAPTER IV

### REFORM PROPOSALS AFTER MAO

#### I. Introduction

The 11th Party Congress, the most important conference ever convened since the passing of Mao, took place on 12th through 18th August 1977 in Peking. Chairman Hua Kuo-feng, in his lengthy report to the delegates, outline his ambitious programs of overall modernization. He made it clear that modernization will be China's top priority in the years immediately ahead.<sup>1</sup>

The new leadership group since late 1976, and increasingly since the return of Teng in July 1977, has developed new policy patterns which became ever more visible after the 11th Party Congress in spite of its preoccupation with strenuous efforts to overcome the difficulties following the passing of Mao. In almost all cases these policies indicated a departure from the concepts which had been developed by Mao and his closest supporters during and after the Cultural Revolution. Of all the policy changes as indicated in Hua's speech to the Party Congress those in the field of education have been most obvious. Again, Hua regarded as his fifth task the development of socialist culture and education. Here, Hua frontally attacked what he described as the Gang of Four's interference and sabotage of higher education

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<sup>1</sup> Peking Review, No. 35, 26 August 1977, pp. 6-64.

and culture, and called for the development of a "vast army" of technical cadres, and of "professors, teachers, scientists, journalists, writers, artists, and Marxist theorists." Once again, the pledge is to "let a hundred flowers blossom and contend...making the past serve the present and things foreign serve China, and...weeding through the old to bring forth the new."

Whatever the future may hold, China's intellectuals must have breathed an air of relief after years of abuse and outright terror. The call was for the creation of a large, new scientific-technological body that will hold the destiny of China in its hands, and such a "class" at some point will almost enjoy the same privileges as now accrue to that group in the Soviet Union, a thought which is distasteful to Hua and his colleagues but which is implicit in their goals of making China a highly productive and powerful nation by the end of this century.

For those who failed to make it to the universities, they will be required to go back to their jobs. Hua, in the same report, specifically listed implementing the "educated youth to the countryside" policy (along with questions concerning cadres, intellectuals, minority nationalities, and the united front) as a problem that could be handled only by getting "a good grasp of Chairman Mao's concept of overall consideration and doing a better job of putting it into effect."

On 27th December 1977, four months after Hua's speech to the Party Congress, a comprehensive survey of the situation was given by Fang Yi (member of the Political Bureau of the Academy of Sciences) in his report on science and education to the People's Political Consultative Conference.<sup>1</sup> In his report, Fang Yi lists a number of decisions: A new Science and Technology Commission will take charge of overall planning, coordination, organization and administration of the country's scientific and technological work. Workers' Propaganda Teams (sent to colleges and schools in September 1968), "having successfully accomplished their historic mission," will now be withdrawn. In keeping with the official policy, at least five-sixths of the working week of scientific and technical personnel are reserved for their professional work. The proportion of the state budget allocated to education and science is to be increased. While many provinces have already produced their own experimental teaching material, preparations are being made to compile a new set of standard textbooks for the whole country.

Fang Yi, on more than one occasion, emphasized the significance of science and technology for China's future development. The training of a huge force of experts and specialists depends on education. It has been provisionally planned to make middle school education in urban areas and junior middle school education

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<sup>1</sup> Peking Review, No. 2, January 13, 1978, pp. 15-19.

in rural areas universal by the end of 1985. Great efforts will be made to develop the July 21 workers' colleges, communist labour universities, spare-time education, and on-the-job-technical training for workers. Besides, the recent decision (Hsinhua or New China News Agency, 26 January 1978) to designate a number of "key" primary and middle schools, both in town and countryside, including some run by industrial enterprises, is an attempt to raise the level of the education of science and technology.

As regards the reported disillusionment of unsuccessful candidates for college entrance, it must have been clear to the reported 5.7 million who sat for the examinations at the end of 1977 that the vast majority could not hope to win places. Many must have been disappointed, but they might have found some solace in being able to go back to their jobs. In future, with the gradual rise in the level of middle school education, the proportion of students enrolled direct from senior middle schools should also rise. The expected improvement in the quality of both primary and middle school education depends in the first place on raising the level of China's nearly ten million teachers. In this connection, a fifteen-day conference on teacher training held in Peking in October and November 1977 decided on steps to be taken to this end.

Since the 11th National Congress of the CCP, there has been a constant flow of documentations of new educational measures here and abroad. But it was not until the National Conference on

Educational Work took place in Peking on 22nd April 1978 that the new leadership spelled out a new line that may be viewed as a more "accurate" interpretation of Mao's educational line.<sup>1</sup> The opening of the conference on education suggests that the new leadership has consolidated its power and has had time to evaluate the educational situation in the light of the present-day conditions before it finally arrived at an overall program of educational reform in post-Mao China.

## II. New Enrollment System for Higher Education

The most conspicuous reform currently introduced are the measures designed to strengthen higher education and its function to produce men and women qualified to undertake the important task of development and nation-building. Students of ability will be selected from middle school graduates to enter higher institutions. They are presumably exempted from the two years of physical labour and reeducation required until now. Entrance examinations are reinstated, and, according to announcements so far published, outstanding students will be admitted even though they may not meet the criteria of high production and political record. Educational quality is now stressed. The decline of

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<sup>1</sup>See Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping's speech at the Opening Ceremony in Peking Review, No. 18, May 5, 1978, pp. 6-12.



educational standards in the recent past is now decried as one of the major "crimes" of the Gang of Four.

After the elimination of the Gang as a political force the new leaders waste no time in launching a massive realignment of educational policy with the aim of starting a fresh college year with a completely new set of first-year students in February 1978. Accordingly, the Ministry of Education has held an important conference on student enrollment, reversing many of the policies of recent years and aiming at high academic standards both in the enrollment procedures and in the subsequent teaching.<sup>1</sup>

The most important single aspect of the new enrollment procedures is that bright school-leavers (at all levels) will be able to go straight to university instead of undertaking a stint in a commune or factory, or get into university by first joining the People's Liberation Army. But the general guiding principles in accordance with Mao's educational concepts still insist that students must study well and also do manual labour well in order to go to college. The process of enrollment entails voluntary application; recommendation by the masses; approval by the political authorities; approval by the school authorities; and the applicants must also sit for an examination. In this manner, students with practical experience are selected and recruited from among

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<sup>1</sup>"New College Enrollment System," in Peking Review, No. 46, Nov. 11, 1977, pp. 16-18.

the workers and peasants.<sup>1</sup>

Another striking reform is the concession to those who missed their chance to go to university because the whole system collapsed in the 1966-67 Red Guard upheaval. There are exceptional cases which can be made as regards educational level and age limits to allow adult workers and peasants to attend college. In their cases, certain people, with a maximum age of 30, will be eligible to apply for college entrance and the requirement that applicants should be unmarried will be waived. The normal age limits are "around 20 but not more than 25."<sup>2</sup>

Also, exceptions to the general guiding principles for enrollment apply to candidates in foreign language, fine arts and physical education.<sup>3</sup> In all these cases, the selection procedures are more flexible taking young people direct from middle schools. Such basic principles will not be changed, but experiments will go on in a flexible way. Under the present enrollment system, the authorities are obviously looking for a huge increase in the intelligence levels of students. All those changes have been made and the objective is to train a larger number of specialists needed to modernize China as quickly as

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<sup>1</sup> See an interview with Chang Hsueh-hsin of the Higher Education Bureau of the Ministry of Education in Peking conducted and reported by Suzanne Pepper in The China Quarterly, No. 72, December 1977, p. 817.

<sup>2</sup> China Reconstructs, No. 4, April 8, 1978, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Suzanne Pepper, op. cit. p. 818.

possible.

The 1978 spring admission was based on the principles that, other things being equal (that is, politically and physically), preferences were given to those who did best in the entrance examination, which has become a universal trend. Young people are now working hard for a solid education. Even primary and middle schools take extra measures to improve the quality of teaching.

It was reported that 5.7 million young people applied for entrance examination at the end of 1977. Of all those who were admitted, "30 percent came from among senior middle school graduates of 1977."<sup>1</sup> This would have enabled students to complete their studies without a break, a very important factor in training researchers. But they would have done a certain amount of physical work every year while in university. China has a huge population and there are not yet enough higher institutes. The percentage of accepted applicants is still very small. For the time being, the majority of the middle school graduates will still be going to the countryside for obvious political and economic reasons. Some of them, however, may still have a chance to enter higher institutes of one form or another on a later date. Others may be accepted into factories or other work places in urban areas.

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<sup>1</sup>China Reconstructs, No. 4, April 1978, p. 8.

In the current admittance program, in keeping with Mao's educational line, where applicants are equal to their political, intellectual and physical qualifications, preference is given to workers and peasants, children of workers and peasants and school graduates who have already settled in the countryside and have thus been reclassified as peasants. Furthermore, special consideration is given to students of national minorities. Agricultural, medical and teachers' institutes give priority to those in agro-science, barefoot doctors and rural school teachers respectively. It is interesting to note that young students from Nationalist China (Taiwan), Hong Kong, Macao, and returned overseas Chinese also receive special attention.

### III. New Teaching System for Primary and Secondary Schools

Another important document from the Ministry of Education recently regarding policies of raising the quality of teaching of primary and middle schools is known as the "Draft Plan for a Ten-Year Full-Time Teaching System for Primary and Middle Schools."<sup>2</sup> According to this Plan, full-time primary and middle school education will take ten years, that is, five years for primary school and five for middle school. In the case of the latter, the first three years will be devoted to teaching

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Peking Review, No. February 24, 1978, p. 15.

junior middle school courses and the last two years to teaching senior subjects. The length of primary and middle schooling will not be expanded beyond the ten-year system. The idea is to standardize the full-day primary and middle schools on a nationwide basis.<sup>1</sup> The new system stipulates that the school begins in autumn. Wherever conditions permit, the enrollment of six-year-old or six-and-a-half-year-old children in primary schools will be gradually enforced in view of the fact that some big cities still do not comply with the new regulation and continue to reject students under seven years old.<sup>2</sup>

The Draft Plan provides details as to the tasks, period of schooling, basic principles for drawing up teaching programs, arrangements concerning the students' main and subsidiary tasks, total volume of activity and curricula of primary and middle schools. Time for political study and other courses will be divided and teaching plans fulfilled according to new requirements. School-run factories and farms (or branch schools in the countryside) will be administered carefully under the new system and the schools will have regular links with factories and rural production brigades. Study at this level is supposed to combine with production and scientific experiments. They are expected to learn

<sup>1</sup> During the Cultural Revolution, the goal of universal education set primary schooling at five years, secondary schooling at four years. But, there existed no distinct dividing line between elementary and secondary education.

<sup>2</sup> Kuang-ming Jih-pao (Kuang-ming Daily), 30th June, 1978, p. 1.

from the workers, peasants and soldiers to awaken their social and political consciousness and display passion for physical labour. They must also master a certain amount of knowledge and technique in industrial and agricultural production.

The Draft Plan stresses the principle of achieving as quickly as possible both the popularization and the raising of the standard of primary and middle school education. But, the question remains that while the ideal schooling period is not uniformly set at ten years, in many parts of the country, particularly the rural areas, this will remain no more than just an ideal for years to come. The fact is that rural schools are still running on a nine-year basis. While they are allowed to remain that way, the Draft Plan recommends that some will convert to the full-day ten-year system. The remaining schools will continue to operate as part-work, part-study schools and agricultural middle schools. Currently, there are more junior middle school graduates than there are senior middle schools to accept them. The goal of popularization will not be achieved in the near future although the standards of education would be raised generally.

Under normal circumstances, there should be no entrance examination for junior and senior middle school. In the major cities, there exists universal senior middle school education and students there move directly from primary school through senior middle school without having to take entrance examination. In

other cities, however, there are only universalized junior middle school education. In such places, only primary school graduate can move directly to junior middle without having to sit for an examination. But, juniors must take an examination if they want to get into senior middle school.

Owing to the fact that in some areas there are more junior middle school graduates than there are places in senior middle schools to accomodate all of them, the system of automatic promotion on the secondary level is therefore more apparent than real. Furthermore, in such cases where new students are admitted they are required to take certain classification tests. The purpose is to discover who needs what kind of extra help and arrange classes for them on individual merits. These enrollment procedures currently being proposed are aimed at raising the quality of teaching and streamlining the academic standard in primary and secondary schools. All such formal examinations point to the fact that while entrance examinations at the secondary level are not formally a part of the system, they do occur in actual practice. It must also be mentioned here that applicants for the technical secondary schools must also sit for an entrance examination.

#### IV. Education in Science and Technology

Currently, education in science and technology is given a new emphasis in China. The importance of "basic studies" and "theoretical science" is recognized. Some scholars have advocated that the first two years of college or university should lay a foundation for advanced study by stressing basic studies and fundamental subjects, and that advanced study should concern itself with the study of theories whose practical value may not be evident for a long time. The heightened interest in science and technology is also underscored by the opening of a national conference on science in late March 1978. Under the new Party policy of education in science and technology, China's scientists and researchers have been virtually freed from participation in political study--one of the most important reforms in Chinese society since 1949.<sup>1</sup>

In his speech at the opening ceremony of the "national science conference" in Peking on 19th March 1978, Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping defined "redness" in a scientist as being good at his work; and said that even communist party committees in scientific institutions would be judged by the success or failure of the work produced.<sup>2</sup> This is a total reversal of the

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<sup>1</sup> Peking Review, No. 13, March 31, 1978, pp. 6-14.

<sup>2</sup> Peking Review, No. 12, March 24, 1978, pp. 9-18.



of the policy of the period 1966-76. Teng insisted, blaming what he called China's backwardness in science and technology on Mao's former supporters, the Gang of Four, that "To devote oneself to our socialist science and contribute to it is an important manifestation of being red, the integration of being red with being expert."<sup>1</sup> While conceding that some scientists were still tainted with bourgeois ideas, he made it clear that this was less important than the "four modernizations" policy of which, he said, technology was the crux. Teng has been the most assertive proponent of a growth-oriented educational system in China and, not surprisingly, was branded a "master technocrat" by some foreign observers. Teng believes that a choice must be made between economics and politics. As he made it clear in his speech to the Conference:

We cannot demand that scientists and technicians, or at any rate the overwhelming majority of them, study a lot of political and theoretical works, participate in numerous social activities and attend many meetings not related to their work.<sup>2</sup>

The CCP Central Committee had decreed a system of individual responsibility in scientific research institutes, with institute directors taking blame for failure. The Party would generally supervise the work of scientific development and ensure that its functionaries familiarize themselves to some extent with the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

technologies under study. Successful scientific work and training of new scientists would be the "main criterion" for judging the party committees' performance. In practice, this would subordinate the party committees to the scientists themselves.

Contrary to the ideas of the former "radicals", the current wisdom in China believes that there are basically no differences between those who work with their hands and those who work with their brains--all are workers. The Gang aimed at the same concept, but tried to achieve it by forcing the intellectuals into manual labour. Under the new policy, scientists and researchers will be expected to spend not more than one-sixth of their time on political study and manual work, and less if necessary. They would presumably help to close the gap between China and the advanced countries in the development of science and technology. National independence, as so emphasized by Mao, does not mean to the new leadership shutting the door on the world, "nor does self-reliance mean blind opposition to everything foreign"--a strong tendency of the "radicals."

The new orientation of education and science and technology in particular is reflected in the enrolment of a new generation of university students, mostly straight from school. But, this new initiative is somewhat marred by the shortage of school-teachers and their misuse by the previous regime. It is no secret that school-teaching became a dreaded profession after the Red Guard upheaval. Fears of maltreatment by students recurred

in 1974 and 1976. Teachers who died or reached retirement age have not been replaced in some schools. Foreign languages have been mentioned as an area in which there is a particular shortage. Teachers have also been "borrowed" by other institutions (it is not clear as yet what kinds of institutions). No doubt, many are happy to get out of such a "dangerous" profession. Now, emphasis is being put on locating them and returning them to the classroom, where discipline will once again be strict. All these measures are aimed at strengthening the teaching profession in the hope that education in science and technology would develop in a sustained manner.

Plans have been drawn up to send several thousands of gifted students abroad in a crash program to catch up on what has been lost since the Cultural Revolution. More and more international intellectual exchanges have already been in progress. All such measures have one objective in common -- to bolster economic efficiency by a revamped educational system in the future.

#### V. Key-Point Schools

The post-Mao educational reform strongly suggests the emergence of "two kinds of education" and a dual system of "regular" schools parallel to other types of schools such as part-time schools and those devoting more time to labour and production--a practice severely condemned during the Cultural Revolution.

Within the system of "regular schools" the typical reform is the reintroduction of "key schools" which will take brighter pupils and receive priority in allocation of teaching materials.<sup>1</sup> As early as 1953, Mao gave the instruction to run some key middle schools, which reached their peak developments in the period 1960-66. Such schools, however, were under serious attack by the radical Gang of Four on the grounds that these schools trained "revisionist buds and intellectual aristocrats and were bourgeois education for geniuses."<sup>2</sup> Under the new Party policy, the effort to improve the quality of education is viewed as an all-important part of the educational system designed to provide competent manpower in the race to modernize China by the end of the century. The best way to achieve this is, as the Peking newspaper put it, "to run key universities and middle and primary schools well" in the light of the present conditions in China.<sup>3</sup>

Now, there are over 400 universities, 200,000 middle schools, a million primary schools, and an innumerable number of spare-time schools throughout China. The idea of running key universities, secondary and primary schools is that given limited manpower, materials and financial resources in present-day China, it is impossible to properly equip so many schools at once. If existing human and material resources are to be evenly distributed, an

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<sup>1</sup> Peking Review, No. 18, February 24, 1978, pp. 14-16.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Kuang-ming Jih-pao, 10 June 1978, p. 1.

inevitable diffusion of forces will result. It appears, therefore, that the best way is to concentrate forces on the proper operation of key schools. At the same time, an improvement in the quality of education in key schools is said to have a stimulating effect on the quality of education in non-key or ordinary schools. Seen in this light, the non-key schools are not at all neglected. Besides, non-key schools may run key classes within their own boundaries. As the Peking paper stated:

(This approach) enables the quality of education in a number of schools or classes to be raised relatively quickly and benefits education as a whole through gradual establishment of a given quality level on a universal basis.

Recently, the Ministry of Education has decided to take a number of measures to promote the idea of running key schools.<sup>2</sup> According to the Ministry, there are now twenty such schools under its direct charge, located in such major cities as Peking, Tientsin, Shanghai, Yenan, Taching, and Tachai, and other places. Moreover, other ministries under the State Council, the big and medium-size cities and the various provinces, prefectures and counties are all expected to run a number of key primary and middle schools.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Peking Review, No. 8, February 24, 1978, pp. 14-16.

Administratively, such schools will be reorganized, giving special attention to experienced teachers who now enjoy a wider range of initiatives than that during the Cultural Revolution. Necessary discipline will also be strictly enforced in the classroom. Such schools will be replenished with the addition of libraries and laboratories to ensure their success. The focus in teaching differs in key schools run by various industrial enterprises where the significance of the unity of theory and practice is more heavily stressed. For instance, in those key schools operated by departments of petroleum, metallurgy, coal and geology, emphasis will be put on subjects related to their specialities. Students will take part in productive labour, in these disciplines so that they will become professionally competent on graduation. These schools will be distributed as evenly as possible throughout the country. But, the actual needs of both town and country will finally dictate such a distribution. Basically, special consideration will be given to urban areas where workers are concentrated so that more children of those workers can go to schools. Non-key schools or ordinary schools will be modelled on key schools, and the really good ones will later also be classified as key schools.

## VI. Other Forms of School

There are other ways for China's young people who failed to make it to the universities to get advanced training, notably through adult education programmes. Understandably, under China's current material conditions, it is impossible to universalize education, particularly on the college level. As a result, while formal education receives greater attention, apparently reflecting on approach to quality learning, the informal and non-formal perograms still have a vital part to play in the post-Mao educational system. Short-term training can produce, for example, medium-range technicians to meet immediate needs, while other specialized training of a more advanced level will be left to universities.

Since China's universities and colleges fall far short of present needs, schools of diverse forms have been set up in various parts of the country to make up for this deficiency. There are, for example, the Communist Labour Colleges for training agro-technicians (set up by communes to train commune members) and the factory-run July 21 Workers' Colleges for training technical personnel among industrial workers. There are also television, radio and correspondence courses. TV courses now being offered jointly by the Ministry of Education and the Peking Television Station are in mathematics, electronics and English. Many factories, rural communes and government organizations provide

counselors to help enrollees of the TV courses. Formal enrollees will take examination and receive graduation certificates.<sup>1</sup>

Such schools, which were criticized by the Maoist radicals during the Cultural Revolution as "putting economics in command," are now coming into fashion again. They are expected to train quickly much larger numbers of technicians and skilled workers urgently needed in agricultural and industrial production. Moreover, these schools help the workers, peasants and soldiers to get some education and technical know-how which would otherwise not be accessible to them. For such schools, part-work and part-study is the guiding principle. The students study on a full-time or part-time basis and go back to their production units after a few years in school. Some study during their off-hours. Such short-term courses as will last a few months will be offered only for special subjects. It is expected that after completing their studies, the students would have reached a standard equivalent to that of graduates of colleges or secondary vocational schools.

In keeping with Mao's educational line, apart from full-time teachers, technicians, experienced workers and peasants from factories and communes, scientific research institutes or universities are invited to deliver lectures to give students

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Peking Review, No. 7, February 17, 1978, pp. 11-13.



a sense of realities. The method of study is one that stresses the combination of theory with practice and teaching with production. Basic studies in the classroom are once again emphasized, but not to the neglect of their practical application through physical labour. The financing of these varied forms of informal schooling remains a problem, particularly in rural areas where the conditions of life are still relatively poor and ill-equipped to provide adequate education for commune members. Consequently, these schools are financed in different ways. In the cases of factory-run schools in urban areas, all necessary funds are provided by the factories themselves, while the peasant's colleges get subsidies from the state.

## CHAPTER V

### THE IMPLEMENTATION OF REFORM

#### I. Introduction

From the Chinese press so far published it can be seen that a number of concrete reforms have been proposed or are being implemented. Invariably, all such reform proposals are initiated from the top by Party Chairman Hua Kuo-feng or Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping, or the Central Committee. Since the campaign against the Gang of Four began, it appears that the new Chinese leadership tried to divert the masses from the tension of political unrest by asking them to criticize the "crimes" of the Gang of Four and discuss educational reforms. As a result, a continuous flow of documentations has come out, but in the majority of these documents only guiding principles are given, incorporated in documents dealing with other political issues. Perhaps, the most important document that came out of the Party regarding educational policies is Teng's speech delivered at the National Educational Work Conference held in Peking on 22nd April 1978. Teng has clearly spelled out in his speech a new educational line which can certainly be viewed, at least temporarily, as a post-Mao consensus on educational policy.

Apparently, the new Chinese leadership has determined and attempted to establish a new model of education by moderating some of Mao's revolutionary features. The moral-political components, though important in Chinese education, are subject to frequent adjustment and redefinition. At present, the trend is towards intellectual learning and all these reinterpretations of educational policies are made by the authorities in power and laid down as the policy line for all to follow. Failure to comprehend this element of ideological reorientation may result in misinterpretation of educational practices in China now.

For the purpose of discussions that follow, the implementation of educational reform in post-Mao China will focus attention on four areas of the educational system: (1) administration of education; (2) enrollment procedures; (3) curricula; and (4) regular education and parallel education.

## II. Administration of Education

During the Cultural Revolution, the control of university affairs had passed into the hands of those who are intellectually ill-equipped and unprepared to manage educational institutions. Before the Cultural Revolution, schools and colleges had largely been managed by professional academics, but a major attempt was made after the Cultural Revolution to "de-professionalize" and democratize educational administration within colleges and

universities. This attempt was reflected in the establishment of work-peasant "Mao Tsetung Thought Propaganda Teams." These teams first emerged in 1968, and initially controlled almost all areas of university administration and management--from curriculum development to the "tempering" of recalcitrant academics. Great efforts had been made to do away with any independent organizations that were specialized in management by intellectuals and reduce as far as possible the number of full-time teachers. Large schools set up a "three-in-one" revolutionary committee under the leadership and guidance of the resident Party Committee in the schools.<sup>1</sup> But the supreme control still rested with the Central Party in Peking.

During the Cultural Revolution, the necessity of an Education Ministry was called into question. Both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education ceased to exist. Instead, a group responsible for science and education under the State Council was mentioned officially in 1972 and took over the coordinating role previously assumed by the two Ministries. In January 1975, during the 4th People's National Congress, this group was replaced by a Ministry of Education responsible for the education system as a whole.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The three elements that constitute the Revolutionary Committee in charge of school administration are the poor and lower-middle peasants, the cadres, and the revolutionary teachers and students. The peasants are supposed to be the mainstay.

<sup>2</sup>M. Bastid-Bruguiere, "Higher Education in the People's Republic of China," in Science and Technology in the People's Republic of China (OECD, Paris, 1977), p. 120.

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Under the new Party policy currently being pursued, the basic structure of educational administration is to be retained.<sup>1</sup> The revolutionary committee will continue to play an important part in educational management, especially in institutions of higher learning. But, because of the new leaders' dedication to improving educational results, greater significance is now being attached to those who know their subjects rather than those who "regard people as their subjects."

Perhaps, the most striking aspect of the reform in educational management is the withdrawal of workers' propaganda teams as a dominant decision-making body in educational institutions.<sup>2</sup> Educational innovations of the Cultural Revolution such as worker-peasant's propaganda teams, revolutionary committees, and the practice of educational institutions being attended, administered and reformed by worker-peasant-soldier personnel are not seen by the new Chinese leadership as merely transitional measures in a crisis situation like the Cultural Revolution! Now that the country has returned to stability the existence of such revolutionary exploits will no longer be necessary with the massive reinstatement of intellectuals and educational administrators. Neither is it necessary for the teams to stay permanently

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<sup>1</sup> Suzanne Pepper, "An Interview on Changes in Chinese Education after the Gang of Four," in The China Quarterly, No. 72, 1977, p. 824.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter IV, Introduction, p. 69.

in the schools. In their place comes the strengthened Party leadership and a system of individual responsibility by school principal. The present system of administration would presumably do better without worker's propaganda teams in terms of efficiency and authority.-

The administrative organs of universities and colleges in China now will be similar to those of institutes of science and technology in that the school Party Secretary still reigns but does not rule as much as he did before. Under the unified leadership of the Party, a system of division of labour and individual responsibility of academic management will be instituted by appointing a principal and vice-principal, chairman and vice-chairman of each department. The revolutionary committee is replaced by the principal who will take charge of overall administration, and by the chairman who will specialize in teaching and research work.<sup>1</sup>

Since the opening of the National Educational Work Conference, there has been a strong request for the strengthening of Party leadership over education, especially the leadership of provincial, municipal and autonomous region party committees. A rectification movement aimed at the leading bodies of education departments and schools are well underway.<sup>2</sup> The Party Secretary with an important

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<sup>1</sup>Ta Kung Pao (Ta Kung Daily), Canton, November 8, 1977.

<sup>2</sup>Kuang-ming Daily, Peking, July 15, 1978..

role to play in educational affairs will be chosen with care. Steps will be taken to encourage teachers to really make an effort to raise the quality of teaching. The wage scale of teachers will be revised and particularly outstanding teachers may be designated as teachers of a special grade. At the university level, Peking University has confirmed and promoted thirty-seven professors and associate professors and claimed that this practice of academic promotions would be continued at Peking University in the future.<sup>1</sup> Recently, educational authorities have complained about the shortage of school-teachers and their misuse during Cultural Revolution, and there have been attempts to recall teachers at all levels.<sup>2</sup>

In the administrative reorganization of the school, the intellectuals and scholars, who were a favourite target of attack during the Cultural Revolution, have participated more actively in the school affairs. Now, new emphasis is laid on the policy of "uniting with, educating and remoulding" the intellectuals. But, at the same time, they are allowed an active role in education. The leadership of the CCP will remain an inviolable principle, although its authority in the field of education is somewhat diluted by the reactivated leadership of professionals. This downgrading of Party authority in actual

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<sup>1</sup>Kuang-ming Daily, Peking, 11 May 1978, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Kuang-ming Daily, Peking, 21 April, 1978, p. 1.

educational administration does not, however, seem to be typical of the Party policy in other sectors, where the Party is still expected to recover a great deal of the prestige which it lost first through the Red Guard upheaval, then through the institution of nation-wide army control, and later through the establishment of revolutionary committees. This is, perhaps, an indication of the new Chinese leadership's determination to turn towards the intellectuals and scholars who are now entrusted with the stupendous task of turning China into an advanced industrialized nation by the end of the century.

### III. Enrollment Procedures

The enrollment of students has been a baffling problem for Chinese educators, who must, in principle, ensure that students of "right" quality and ideology enter schools, particularly universities. The problem is exacerbated when there are more qualified students than there are enough places to accept them. Not surprisingly, student enrollment methods and procedures constitute a constant source of disputes within and outside the education system.

In recent years, the official recommendation and selection committee's interest centre primarily on political qualities and work enthusiasm of students. But, owing to the small number of places in higher education, this ideological criterion proves



inadequate for the necessary selection. Even if other criteria are adopted for pre-selection, the level of academic qualifications acquired becomes the decisive factor governing entrance to university. In some cases, moreover, students for science and foreign languages sections are recruited directly from secondary school. Hence, practice does not necessarily adhere to what is considered as a rule by outside observers. For admission, the requirement of two years of "practical experience", universally applied, does not always seem to be fulfilled. Cases are mentioned where talented youths are employed in ministerial departments instead of being sent down to the countryside or to factories. More importantly, the requirement can apparently be waived when a given student possesses a "special skill", and it is therefore possible that either the best students or even the most selective universities in China, particularly those institutions that train students for future research assignments, do not adhere to this ideological requirement.

The current university enrollment (April 1978) is the first after Mao Tse-tung. In addition to admitting worker-peasant middle school graduates or non-graduates, some students are being taken in directly from senior middle schools. About 30 percent of the total students registered for the spring 1978 session come from among senior middle school graduates of 1977.<sup>1</sup> The general

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<sup>1</sup>See above, p. 74.

guidelines laid down by the Ministry of Education are that any senior middle school graduates or the equivalent, between 20 and 25 years of age, unmarried and in good health, can apply to sit for the university entrance examination. Some exceptions, however, are permitted, especially for graduates from the classes of 1966 and 1967. In such cases, they can be 30 years old and married because they have received better academic foundation than middle school graduates during any year since the period. Also, outstanding senior middle school students, whether or not graduating in the current year, are allowed to take the examination provided they are recommended by their schools.<sup>1</sup> There are two sections in the university entrance examination, the liberal arts and the science sections. In Kwang-tung province, for example, the science section includes questions on politics, Chinese, mathematics, physics, and chemistry. The liberal arts section includes questions on politics, Chinese, mathematics, and geography. Foreign language students sit for an additional examination in that language.<sup>2</sup>

There are as yet no unified national college entrance examinations. Such examinations are now taken and administered only on a provincial basis, and each school tests for its specific

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<sup>1</sup>Wen Hui Pao, Canton, 10 November 1977. Cited by Suzanne Pepper, "Education and Revolution: The Chinese Model Revisited," in Asian Survey, No. 9, 1978, p. 882.

<sup>2</sup>Wen Hui Pao, 3 November 1977. Quoted in S. Pepper, op. cit.

requirements. There were no unified national examinations because of the widespread discrepancies in educational standards after ten years of decentralized administration strongly favored by the mass-line policy. For 1978, however, such an examination has been enacted upon.<sup>1</sup>

The administrative structure for this enrollment stage resembles that in operation during the early 1970s, but the exact composition of various enrollment committees remains unknown. The preliminary selection is undertaken by prefectural or municipal committees and is based on three criteria: the entrance examination scores, a political screening and physical check-up. Only those who have passed the entrance examination will proceed to the political and physical tests.<sup>2</sup>

The 1977 enrollment ended in February 1978. About 5.7 million young students applied, and 278,000 were admitted.<sup>3</sup> Those who were admitted for the spring session of 1978 are now in class. The present trend is toward higher academic attainments and adequate academic preparations would contribute to this end. The new admission requirements stipulate that those who apply for science and engineering must have graduated from senior middle school or the equivalent. Liberal arts applicants must have at least graduated from junior middle school and must also

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<sup>1</sup>Ta Kung Pao, November 3, 1977. Quoted in S. Pepper, op. cit., p. 882.

<sup>2</sup>S. Pepper, op. cit., p. 883.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 882.

have passed the entrance examination.<sup>1</sup>

Importance is now being attached to research and graduate students. They will be selected from the People's Liberation Army and from work units, as well as from the graduating students. Since the Cultural Revolution, there has not been much discussion about graduate studies in China. It was not announced until 1975 that China's research institutes began to enroll graduate students for future research assignments. At present, graduate studies at major universities are being reactivated. The number of students to be admitted has yet not been announced, but more than 200 institutions of higher learning throughout China will accept graduate students in 1978 as will research institutes of the Academy of Science and other government departments.<sup>2</sup>

Further details on the new enrollment policy for higher education have been disclosed by numerous provincial authorities. Other provinces have probably adopted the same procedures.<sup>3</sup> But it is necessary to point out that although the central authorities in Peking have issued guiding principles concerning the procedures and methods of student enrollment, the actual practice displays

<sup>1</sup>S. Pepper in The China Quarterly, No. 72, 1977, p. 820.

<sup>2</sup>Ta Kung Pao, November 16, 1977 & January 22, 1978; Peking Review, No. 37, September 15, 1978, p. 26. Cited by S. Pepper in Asian Survey, No. 9, 1978, p. 881. Also see Translations on the People's Republic of China (U.S. Joint Publications Research Service), No. 425, 1978, pp. 37-41.

<sup>3</sup>Translations on the People's Republic of China, No. 406, December 5, 1977, pp. 22-24. Hereafter cited as Translations: PRC.

considerable local variations.<sup>1</sup> Apart from local variations in enrollment procedures, there is one point common to all regions, namely, those students who have come from rural areas are being geared towards training on agro-scientific subjects. Thus, students from Szechwan Province, for example, are trained for jobs in agriculture or other related tasks, while those from the major urban cities are trained on subjects which are related to their work in factories, mines or other industrial enterprises. In fact, the admission procedures since 1972 tend to recruit only those so-called "intellectual youth," that is, secondary school graduates transferred to the rural areas or factories in the cities, and only students in large cities fall into this category.<sup>2</sup>

Another important aspect of the reform of the enrollment system concerns the "political screening" of applicants for college.<sup>3</sup> Political screening of university applicant's family background is not a new idea in Chinese politics, but it has increased in importance since the early 1960s. At present, under the new Party policy currently being pursued, political screening of college applicants will be determined mainly by one's political performance rather than by one's family background.

<sup>1</sup>Translations: PRC, No. 439, July 7, 1978, pp. 48-49 & No. 411, January 12, 1978, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup>See, e.g., M. Bastid-Bruguiere, op. cit., p. 121.

<sup>3</sup>Jen-min Jih-pao (People's Daily), April 26, 1978, p. 2.

Some officials responsible for college enrollment have been warned against the misconception of enrolling students exclusively on the basis of family credentials.<sup>1</sup> Political performance of the student refers, essentially, to his political attitude which comprises political record, devotion to the CCP and socialism, not adverse to labour, abiding by revolutionary discipline and "studying for the revolution."<sup>2</sup>

#### IV. Curricula

The major educational innovations since the Cultural Revolution have been the integration of manual and production work into education, and the more direct involvement of the school with society. These innovations were based on many earlier experiments by Chinese Communists both before and after 1949, particularly during the Great Leap Forward, but they have been developed and become more widespread during and after the Cultural Revolution.

Since the Cultural Revolution, the length of curricula has in theory been shortened, yet, uniformity has not been achieved, and a gap between urban and rural areas still exists. In some cases, curricula may be as long as those before the Cultural Revolution.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Peking Review, No. 16, April 1978, p. 12.

Since then particularly after 1970, studies at college cover a three-year period, or sometimes two years in certain technical sections. However, a four-year course has been provided for theoretical physics since 1971. The trend towards longer courses is found wherever key disciplines are concerned.

Within the syllabus, political education is curtailed in science and technical departments: it is equivalent to about 30 percent of the time-table in 1970, and 10-15 percent at the end of 1973. During a campaign, however, political activities may dominate in all curricular activities. Since 1973, there has been a strong tendency towards strengthening theoretical studies.

At present, under the new Party policy, the desired period of schooling for primary and secondary pupils is set at 10 years -- five in primary school; three in junior middle school and two in senior middle school. Some variations exist in many rural areas. At the university level, the period of learning will be varied according to the needs of different specialities. Some need three years and some need four years, or even five years for such courses as mathematics, medicine, and some foreign languages.<sup>1</sup>

Chinese scientists and researchers have been almost exempted from political education and guaranteed five-sixths of the time-table on academic studies, while manual labour and other activities are restricted to no more than one-sixth of the total. The

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<sup>1</sup> Ta Kung Pao, November 3, 1977. Cited by S. Pepper in Asian Survey, No. 9, 1978, p. 880.

present emphasis is laid on theoretical studies and research work, which is well supported by Chinese official news media and well received by the academic community.<sup>1</sup> In a massive overturn of the revolutionary policies, students at institutions of higher education will spend more than three times as many hours on academic pursuits as before. But, generally, a period of four weeks per school year or two weeks per semester is still required of college students for physical labour.<sup>2</sup>

Although the present emphasis is put on science, the arts and social sciences will not be ignored. Graduate students are being enrolled by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences to study economics, literature, languages, history, archaeology, law and even religion. Marxist philosophy and politics are major topics in social sciences. More care will also be given to the study of customs, history and languages of the national minorities. A bibliography of foreign works on these subjects is to be compiled.<sup>3</sup>

Students from work-peasant backgrounds are being channelled to colleges which are specialized in the subjects in which they have acquired practical experience. Thus, miners' children will be encouraged to go to coal and petroleum colleges, while peasant youths will find entrance easier to agricultural colleges than to

<sup>1</sup>Jen-min Jih-pao, March 13, 1978, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>David Bonavia, "Better Read than Red," in Far Eastern Economic Review, April, 1978, p. 29; S. Pepper, op. cit., p. 880.

<sup>3</sup>David Bonavia, ibid.



the major universities.

In some middle schools, a placement test is instituted to stream students on the basis of their academic attainments. At present, the most common method is to sort out students at any particular grade into three categories--fast, average and slow. Plans have been drawn up for the teaching materials for primary and middle schools to be streamlined on a nationwide basis. Individual schools are warned against interrupting classroom studies with unrealistic activities.<sup>1</sup>

In primary schools, politics will not be taught until the fourth and fifth grades, through the curriculum for younger children will not be completely devoid of political content. Political studies will also continue in middle schools. Apart from political education, there are seven subjects for primary school pupils: Chinese language, arithmetic, foreign language, general knowledge of natural science, physical culture, music and painting. At least five subjects are usually taught at the same time. The pupils are generally required to study one foreign language, English or Russian, beginning in the third year. Where possible, other foreign languages such as Japanese, French, German, Spanish and Arabic are taught. Required courses for middle school students include mathematics, Chinese and foreign languages, physics,

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<sup>1</sup> Weh Hui Pao, November 23, 1977 & April 2, 1978; Ta Kung Pao, Nov., 26, 1977; Jen-min Jih-pao, April 23, 1978. Cited by S. Pepper, op. cit., pp. 875 & 877.

chemistry, history and biology.<sup>1</sup>

A variety of new measures have been adopted to improve pedagogy at both the local and national levels.<sup>2</sup> Primary school pupils are expected to attend 26 lessons periods a week, with an additional 10 periods of other activities--presumably political meetings, sport, and manual labour. In middle schools, classroom studies will occupy 28 to 29 hours a week out of a total of 42 to 43 periods.<sup>3</sup> The idea of "open-door" schooling, which is central to Mao's philosophy of education, continues to receive attention, but "pure manual labour" is to be castigated. Work experiences must be acquired in such a way as to enhance theoretical understanding, especially in scientific and technological fields. Generally, physical work for the full-time students have been set at three weeks per academic year for the higher grades of primary school, six weeks per year for junior middle school, and eight weeks per year for senior middle school.<sup>4</sup> But whether these work schedules would actually be implemented remains a moot point.

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<sup>1</sup> Peking Review, No. 36, September 8, 1978 p. 15; David Bonavia, op. cit., p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> See Jen-min Jih-pao, 23 April 1978, p. 2 & 14 April 1978 (editor's note); Kuang-ming Jih-pao, 17 May 1978, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> David Bonavia, op. cit., p. 29.

<sup>4</sup> Ta Kung Pao, July 20, 1978. Cited by S. Pepper, op. cit., p. 879.

### V. Regular Education and Parallel Education

As far as regular students and graduates are concerned only, the student body has dwindled considerably since 1966. This contraction has been aggravated by the fact that few students were enrolled during the four-year period from 1966-1970, although the population has been increasing at an average of 1.5 percent per year and China has launched an ambitious economic development program. However, account should be taken of the shortening of the schooling period, and, above all, of the very large number of students trained on an "irregular" basis. It would be a mistake to consider education in China stopping at the school door; education takes place at all places and at all times. The boundary of formal and informal schooling has long remained blurred. On the other hand, if we pay attention to the renewed college enrollment system, it is obvious that students are now being streamed into many and various specializations according to the academic standards achieved. Apparently, there exists now in the Chinese education system a "double-track" system, which was in operation before the Cultural Revolution.

Regular education, particularly the "key-point" schools and universities, still constitutes the keynote of the system, but regular traditional pedagogy is now supplemented by the half-work, half-study system or by imposing this system on at least some of the regular student body and requiring institutes of higher

learning to provide accelerated training, refresher and re-training courses for part-time students, as well as disseminate the results of research.

Currently, there are over 400 universities, 200,000 middle schools, and a million primary schools throughout China. The number of spare-time schools is innumerable.<sup>1</sup> To handle such a vast number of educational institutions in a comprehensive manner and simultaneously produce high-quality scientists and scholars requires the inauguration of key-point schools being supplemented by ordinary and informal ones. Many cities and provinces have already established a considerable number of key-point schools and universities.<sup>2</sup>

Part-time schooling, introduced since 1950 and culminated during the Cultural Revolution, is devised as a means of achieving the transfer of technology to the countryside, as an expedient to keep a segment of the workforce, especially the young, away from the saturated urban centres, and as a way of providing educated youths who have been "sent down" to the countryside with a possibility to continue their education. It has been a Party policy to send school graduates to the countryside for both economic and ideological reasons. The rustication of young people will continue in post-Mao China and many provinces have already announced their

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<sup>1</sup> Kuang-ming Jih-pao, 10 June 1978, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> David Bonavia, op. cit., p. 29; Jen-min Jih-pao, 19 March, 1978, p. 2; Kuang-ming Jih-pao, 10 June 1978, p. 1.

plans for the future.<sup>1</sup> But rustication seems now confined to shorter periods and to those youngsters who failed in high school and college entrance examination. If students settle down in the countryside, they will be reclassified as peasants and considered as such when they enter university.

Chinese officials claimed that, up to mid-1977, 14 million secondary school graduates with two or more years work experience are in the countryside or in factories. There are at present eight million young people, with either a junior or senior middle school education from the cities, working in the countryside. Since the Cultural Revolution, a total of 12 million junior and senior middle school graduates have gone to the countryside, but four million have returned to work in factories or elsewhere. Plans are being made to send five million senior middle school graduates to the countryside each year.<sup>2</sup>

The May 7th Cadre Schools<sup>3</sup> to which Party and State functionaries are sent for stints of labour for differing periods of time remained in operation until the autumn of 1977. But the Central Party School which had been closed in 1966 because of its "revisionist tendencies," was re-opened in Peking on 9th October 1977.<sup>4</sup> Almost all provinces

<sup>1</sup>See, e.g., S. Pepper in The China Quarterly, No. 72, 1977, p. 823.

<sup>2</sup>S. Pepper, op. cit., p. 823.

<sup>3</sup>There are two kinds of May 7th Schools in China. In addition to that for Party cadres, one is intended for agricultural workers, which is run by people's communes.

<sup>4</sup>Hsinhua News Agency, Peking, 9 October 1977. Chairman Hua Kuo-feng was appointed President of the School.

have established Party schools... These schools would take over the functions heretofore assigned to the May 7th Cadre Schools. Apart from these Party schools for cadres, the continuation of a huge migration of young people to the countryside each year requires education of one form or another to be offered to these sent-down youths most of whom still hope to enter college or university later.

Apparently, the restoration of the two-track system of full-time, regular schools and part-work, part-study, informal schools is well underway. For those students who failed to make it to universities, such "irregular" education as the worker's college and peasant's college provides an alternative opportunity of higher education although a large number are universities or colleges by name, which often simply offer workers and peasants further training outside working hours. The present trend exhibits an expansion of these informal colleges, along with the regular full-time ones. It was recorded in mid-1977 that there were 780,000 students enrolled in the worker's colleges and one million enrolled in the agricultural schools.<sup>1</sup> Within the regular system itself, the practice of work-study continues to receive attention, probably because it provides a means of financing school budgets. The idea of the unity of theory and practice still holds, but "pure manual labour" and "open-door" schooling are being reduced, at least within the formal system itself.

<sup>1</sup>S. Pepper in Asian Survey, No. 9, 1978, p. 879.

## CHAPTER VI

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

#### I. Ideological Reorientation

If ideology is defined as "a manner of thinking characteristic of an organization,"<sup>1</sup> it can be argued that post-Mao China is experiencing an ideological reorientation and rationalization, a tendency towards a rejection of the Maoist revolutionary values and an adoption of a pragmatic, rational stance. In terms of the two categories of the Chinese educational system, (that is, moral-political and intellectual),<sup>2</sup> it can be said that China now tends to emphasize the intellectual rather than the moral-political dimensions. More precisely, the focus is on "professionalism" and efficiency.

The post-Mao consensus temporarily terminated the preoccupation with class struggle in favour of a pragmatic economy, education, cultural affairs and foreign policy. This did not, however, resolve debates among competing priorities, but it did end the bitter and violent confrontations between the "Maoist radicals" and the revisionist moderates," which occurred during the 1966-76 decade.

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter I, Statement of the Problem, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Chapter II, Socialist Educational Objectives and Education in China, pp. 14-43, especially pp. 23-25 & the Conclusions, pp. 42-43.

Basically, the issue of political ideology in China is largely one of the acquisition of a firm proletarian outlook, a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist viewpoint, and the inheritance and development of the revolutionary traditions of the Chinese Communist Party. The school as a socializing agent plays an important role in bringing about this ideology among the masses. As Leo Orleans has put it:

...Learn the work ethic, they get involved in community projects, they are taught the importance of "serving the people and "to keep the public good in mind".... It is an education that is particularly suitable to Peking's stated goal and, if judged in those terms, it is being implemented with considerable success.

If this is the overriding aim of Chinese education, what confronts the new leadership is not that they have to make a choice between ideology and economic growth, but to decide how much ideology must be sacrificed in order to achieve economic benefits quickly, or what aspects of the economy can be deemphasized in order to preserve the ideological base necessary to achieve the paramount objective. In other words, disputes are about priorities rather than fundamental principles of nation-building. Such policy preferences of the new leaders, nonetheless, would constitute the potential source of much controversy that might involve significant political consequences.

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<sup>1</sup>Leo A. Orleans, "Achievements and Problems in Education," in Science and Technology in the People's Republic of China (OECD, Paris, 1977), p. 100.



It has become clear that China's new leadership has embarked upon a selective adoption of Mao's legacy in running the country. It is equally clear that China's political revolution has been held in check, to be replaced by a new revolution in economic development, science and technology, which exerts a tremendous impact on education. No doubt, such priority given the economy and intellectual education over politics had been attacked by the Maoist radicals during the Cultural Revolution as revisionism or downright anti-revolution. Obviously, the current trend is towards deemphasizing some aspects of the ideology which usually is associated with Mao. The focus of attention has shifted from political class struggle to economic struggle and strengthening the productive forces; subjective superstructure to objective economic base;<sup>1</sup> and from "man" and his will to material means of production. In brief, Maoism is replaced by revisionist Marxism in the social and economic sectors which are stressed by the Soviets. The moral-political contents of Maoism are somewhat diluted by revisionist Marxism,<sup>2</sup> which is becoming ever more apparent in China after Mao. As Chairman Hua Kuo-feng has insisted in his speech at the National Science Conference:

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<sup>1</sup> Subjective superstructure here includes Mao's revolutionary education aimed at purifying the superstructure of political and socioeconomic institutions.

<sup>2</sup> Revisionist Marxism is here defined as gradual, peaceful, and legal means of achieving socialism on the basis of a steady accretion of economic, social, and political gains to the working class.

Only by building up a modern agricultural, industrial, national defence and science and technology can we provide our socialist system with a powerful material base, steadily consolidate and develop this system, effectively defeat capitalism at home and find ourselves in a stronger position to resist aggression by social imperialism and imperialism from abroad.

This ideological reorientation (to stress differing values, justify new programs and explain new situations) needs not delude us into believing that a complete rejection of Mao Tsetung's thought and adoption of Marxism-Leninism are under way. To be sure, such a turn towards revisionism signifies that less attention will be given to Mao's philosophy of education<sup>1</sup> and greater emphasis will be laid on an efficient economy--productivity, material conditions<sup>2</sup> and "distribution according to work" instead of "distribution according to needs." Mass mobilization in the social and economic sectors has lost much of its relevance nowadays, but in the ideological and organizational sectors it has retained considerable significance. The new leadership would find it fit to wage educational campaigns at the Party, the State and the army. Quite apart from the recent emphasis on intellectual education, the moral-political imperatives will continue to receive attention in view of the fact that China is still a relatively poor country, with scarce economic resources, and material incentives will be difficult to

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<sup>1</sup> Translation in Peking Review, No. 13, March 31, 1978, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter II, pp. 14-43.

offer. The moral-political motivations provided by mass campaigns will continue to be an important instrument of political control, as indicated by the recent campaigns--a "mass movement to expose and criticize the Gang of Four," an "education movement in Marxist ideology," and a "movement of Party consolidation and rectification."<sup>1</sup>

These campaigns may be more carefully planned and more tightly controlled than those of the 1966-76 decade in that they may resemble the Socialist Education Movement of the early 1960s more than the Cultural Revolution, but they, nonetheless, will be mass campaigns.

The survival of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought as the State ideology depends to a large extent on the social and economic constraints to which the new leadership is subjected. In any event, even though the new leadership might find it fit to depart drastically from Mao's revolutionary values, there may still be limits on the extent of inequality socialist system can put up with. Indeed, as Michael Harrington put it: "The liberating potential of technology was forgotten, or else subordinated to the drive for more and more production."<sup>2</sup> The striving for abundance underscores the "incompatibility of socialism with conditions of underdevelopment."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Peking Review, No. 1, January 1977, pp. 32-47; Jen-min Jih-pao, January 1, 1977.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Harrington, "Leisure As the Means of Productivity," in Kolakowski & Hampshire (eds.), The Socialist Idea: A Reappraisal (New York: 1974), p. 158.

<sup>3</sup> Wlodzimierz Brus, op. cit., p. 165.

It is this contradiction between social and economic goals that will pose a challenge to the wisdom of the post-Mao leadership.

## II. Educational Reform in Response to Changes in Economic Strategy

Apart from reforms in education, economic rehabilitation and expansion of production rank high on the agenda of the programs of the post-Mao leadership. Accomplishing these economic objectives is certainly not an easy task because problems abound in the social and economic scene. Labour productivity is very low, partly as a result of a policy of low wages and few material incentives. Some key sectors such as coal, transportation, and electric power have suffered greatly from past neglect.<sup>1</sup> More and more capital investment is required to boost agricultural output, cut down the expenditure on the import of grain and save foreign exchange. At the same time, in view of the sinister Soviet expansionism and political unrest in Southeast Asia, the military leaders are requesting modernization of the armed forces;<sup>2</sup> workers demand higher wages, and consumers ask for more goods and housing.<sup>3</sup> Above all, there has been a mounting public

<sup>1</sup>For an account of the post-Mao Chinese economic difficulties, see Yu Chiu-li's report to the 4th Session of the Standing Committee of the 4th National People's Congress reported in Hsinhua News Agency, October 24, 1977. Translation in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Daily Report: People's Republic of China (Washington, D.C.), October 25, 1977, pp. E/6-12. Hereafter cited at FBIS-PRC.

<sup>2</sup>Kuang-ming Jih-pao, Peking, January 20, 1977.

<sup>3</sup>Yu Chiu-li, op. cit.

outcry for freedom of expression and general liberalization.

Currently, the question most frequently asked about China's education is whether for the sake of immediate economic or ideological benefits, China is sacrificing her future. If priority was accorded ideology, would there be, for example, enough highly trained experts and top quality scientists to meet China's needs in the year 2000? Apparently, the present trend is towards a growth-oriented education system with greater emphasis on intellectual learning than moral-political socialization. But the current reform, nonetheless, takes place within a broader moral-political-intellectual framework and is in response to specific economic goals of the overall development policy.<sup>1</sup> The present reform is not only an attempt to develop the moral-political potential of man, but, more importantly, also to produce specialists and experts who would possess knowledge and useful skills desperately needed for fulfilling China's ambitious plans to become a strong and modern industrialized nation.

After the educational setback during the Cultural Revolution China now has committed herself to rapid scientific and technological progress. The necessity to produce and, subsequently, fill high level technical positions has tended to give special opportunities to exceptionally gifted students at the sacrifice of the egalitarian values; social and economic inequalities will be tolerated in the

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<sup>1</sup>Overall development refers to the "four modernizations" of agriculture, industry, national defence and science and technology.

name of national advancement. The growth of elitism seems inevitable; so will be the opposition on the part of the radical wing of the Party and government. But, as long as the present policy is being pursued as top policy priority, any drastic divergences will be aborted.

It is too early to evaluate with precision the post-Mao educational reform, which is still very much in a state of flux. Perhaps, what is important in learning about Chinese education in particular is the prevailing spirit and general orientation. The educational process has its specific requirements. Chinese students must learn Marxism-Leninism and the thought of Mao Tsetung, which takes a long time and requires a practical approach. To ignore them is unrealistic even though what different results will be achieved depends on the spirit and general orientation that provide us, in the first instance, with some insightful observations of the new educational development.

It is beyond the scope of the present study to assess how successful socialist education in China has been. Suffice it to say that China has made tremendous efforts at raising the level of education of her people since 1949, while the ideal of universalization of education has never been lost sight of. Indeed, remarkable results have been accomplished and will continue to materialize.<sup>1</sup> If this admirable record and what has been discussed in the foregoing

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<sup>1</sup>See, e.g., Peking Review, No. 36, September 8, 1978, p. 15 & No. 2, January 13, 1978, p. 18.

chapters is something that counts, it cannot be denied that there is in China both the will and effort to set up a vast and new education.

We are so often tempted to believe that the priority accorded ideology is almost always a priority to pur abstract theory because we are convinced that it is only through specific policies that these abstract values are realized. In China now, economic necessity has, no doubt, prompted a number of proposals, measures and criticisms here and abroad in the field of education, though educational reform as a whole cannot just be considered a solution of budget difficulties. The reform meets concrete political ideology for the new leadership. What needs to be done, perhaps, is to strike a balance between political ideals and economic imperatives with their practical implications for educational programs. Failure to do so would entail more and bitter political strife in the years ahead.

Of course, striking this balance is not an easy task. The risks for the new leadership are very real. After more than a decade of internal turmoils and avoiding foreign influence, there are the possibilities of weakening the faith of the young people in socialism following their disenchantment about the Cultural Revolution.<sup>1</sup> Then, there is the social impact of sending a large number of the brightest students to study in the "decadent

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<sup>1</sup> This point is implicated when the Cultural Revolution was evaluated by post-Mao leaders as "70 percent good, 30 percent defective." Cited by Robert Scalapino, "Policies of the Post-Mao Era," in Asian Survey, No. 11, 1977, p. 1055.

capitalist world."<sup>1</sup> Above all, there is the danger that the emergence of a new highly-educated elite group protected by a system of formal examinations would sow deeper disaffection among the radical Maoists who ran the educational system during the Cultural Revolution.

The likeliest precautionary measures for the new leaders are, therefore, a fairly long period of strenuous reassertion of the Central Government's authority and a continued effort at mass mobilization campaigns.<sup>2</sup> To the extent that these activities become internalized in the masses of people as political beliefs, it would no longer be necessary for the new leadership to justify every policy change which might be in conflict with the general feelings of the masses. This will not be the most efficient way of running the economy; it will also not be particularly popular with the Chinese people. But, if it produces enough economic growth to keep living standards moving up slowly, perhaps, through the mechanism of a reward system and if the bad memories of 1966-76 stay in people's minds, it will probably get by. If it does not produce the desired economic results, it will give way either to a comeback of far-left revolutionary fervour or to an experiment in more relaxed, more

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<sup>1</sup>For a report of more foreign contacts; see Peking Review, No. 25, June 23, 1978, p. 31; J. Walker, "China Turns to the West for an Educational Update," in The Gazette (Montreal), August 22, 1978, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>See above, p. 114; also, Hua Kuo-feng's speech at the 11th Party Congress, translated in Peking Review, No. 35, August 26, 1977, pp. 6-64.



economically efficient, decentralization.

All this has been said; the hard fact remains: even with the strongest will in the world China will be a long time making up for 1966-72, when universities hardly functioned, and the four years after that when they were used as political forums by the Gang of Four. Until 1985, almost all students who finish university and graduate schools will have suffered some disruption in their education at secondary level or above. And it will be 1982 before the first batch of post-Gang graduates and post graduates can move into technical jobs and laboratories where they are needed.

Since the new college enrollment system has come into effect and the first post-Mao college entrance examination held in late 1977, there has been a strong tendency for academic excellence. The stress on "professionalism" in the intellectual community becomes increasingly obvious and political qualifications are correspondingly less necessary. The result is that the new system tends to admit many new students who excel in academic work but lack political experience and commitment. The vast majority of the new students, no doubt, come from working class backgrounds. But even this overriding admission criterion is more apparent than real and is, in fact, deceptive to foreign observers. These students are considered workers or peasants when they enter universities after spending two to three years working in factories or in the farms.<sup>1</sup> There is no doubt that such admission practice puts the genuine

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<sup>1</sup>See, e.g., S. Pepper in The China Quarterly, No 72, 1977, p. 823; M. Bastid-Bruguere, op. cit., p. 121.

peasants and workers at a disadvantage because city youths are invariably better educated than their rural counterparts and thus have a better chance of being admitted to universities. This infringement of equality of educational opportunities becomes even more pronounced and deceptive when most of the college students are in practice recruited in the countryside from those young people who have been sent down to the countryside from the cities.<sup>1</sup> Under the new system which enrolls only young people with the best academic and political credentials, this reclassification of city boys and girls as workers or peasants is deemed necessary since Party policy favours workers and peasants in the enrollment of college students and since city students are supposed to return to their former occupations in the countryside after graduation, the reclassification can be justified in that manner. Also, the ideal of creating proletarian intellectuals will rationalize the official policy of sending more and more urban youths to the countryside, thereby attracting more youths to settle down in the rural areas.

No doubt, the students enrolled under this system are much more competent in administration and academic studies than those admitted principally on the basis of political behavior. They, therefore, tend to draw political responsibility and power away from the veteran revolutionary cadres many of whom have enjoyed political power during

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<sup>1</sup> The sent-down youth made up a major proportion of college students. See, for example, Thomas Bernstein, Up to the Mountain and Down to the Villages (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 284.

the Cultural Revolution. The new college enrollment system tends also to bring with it the amalgamation of political and intellectual elites, who are committed to economic and social progress as they envision it, but are likely to neglect political class struggles so much emphasized by Mao in favour of a long-term material, rationalist, approach.

The new policy recommended a plan which defined a system of promotion of teaching staffs and status hierarchy based primarily on academic performance. While students are instructed that their prime duty is to study and acquire professional ability for the sake of revolution, teachers are encouraged to specialize in their fields. The combination of professionalism, the recruitment of more intellectuals to the Party bureau and supervision of Party representatives in routine administration would foster bureaucratization.

One of the major achievements of the Cultural Revolution in relation to education is the proletarianization of education: the "open-door" education system and half-work, half-study schools. This organic link between the education system and society has given an original character to China's educational innovations. At present, this type of schooling, along with the more formal, full-time system, continues to receive moral-political and intellectual support. Above all, owing to China's extremely limited material and human resources, this kind of informal schooling appears to offset

the shortage of full-time senior secondary school graduates.<sup>1</sup>

During the Cultural Revolution, admission into secondary and college education was based primarily on three criteria: the applicant's class background, political record and entrance examination. In most cases, the entrance examination was not insisted on for all the applicants. The post-Mao system has seen a reversal of these admission requirements in that performance on examination becomes the decisive factor, followed by political record and class background. Class background is considered the least important because one cannot choose one's own parents and is, therefore, viewed merely as an objective factor. What is more important is the applicant's political contribution and commitment to the cause of socialism.<sup>2</sup>

In view of the fact that the new leadership is determined to raise the quality of education and admit only the best of the elite, the university entrance examination is expected to be extremely competitive. The new system requires also that admission into senior middle schools entails a selective examination.

Those who defend the examinations assert that they provide a fair and uniform admissions system which will sort out the most talented students for further education and is compatible with China's present economic constraints. But implicit in this argument

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<sup>1</sup>Jen-min Chiao-yu (People's Education), No. 1, January 31, 1978, pp. 3-6. Translation in Translations: PRC, No. 431, May 24, 1978, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup>See above, Enrollment Procedures, p. 100.

is considerable departure from Mao's educational line that is based upon the concepts of egalitarianism. The growth of elitism also manifests itself in the re-introduction of "key-point schools," which will take gifted students and receive priority in allocation of teachers and teaching materials.<sup>1</sup> Another important reform is the enrollment of university day students, conducted on a trial basis due to lack of experience. This enrollment of university day students is the first time since 1949 and viewed as one way to expand university enrollment. Those who are willing to become day students are encouraged to do so in order that more boarding students may be enrolled. In China, collective boarding schools constitute the best of the elite schools for exceptional students. During the Cultural Revolution, these collective schools were severely criticized for being similar to the British and Soviet "schools for aristocratic children."<sup>2</sup>

Judging by the Chinese materials so far published, the post-Mao education system looks something like this: At the top of the pyramid are the elite schools, which are under the direct administration of the Ministry of Education and which train students for the universities whose graduates are to become China's future leaders, scientists and scholars. Chinese elite schools in this

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<sup>1</sup> See above, Key-Point Schools, pp. 82-85.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, "Oppose Collective Boarding Schools for Children of Cadres," in Chun-lei (Spring Thunder), No. 4, April 13, 1967.

sense bear a semblance to the "feeder schools" in the West.\* Below the elite schools are the ordinary full-time schools, which are to train middle-level technicians, engineers and teachers most of whom are destined for occupations in the countryside if the current policy on agriculture does not change. At the bottom are the part-time schools--the half-work, half-study and spare-time schools--which are simply to provide a modicum of education for China's future peasants and the working masses and to train lower-level technicians and engineers to man the modernization projects in the rural regions.

That there has been a strong tendency for intellectual learning in post-Mao China need not delude us into concluding that China is sacrificing her future as a socialist country for the sake of immediate economic benefits. The new leadership finds it flexible to apply different value systems at different times and at different levels so that it is possible for a commune, for example, to apply a complete Maoist value system to agriculture (such as the Tachai "Mass-line" model),<sup>1</sup> while the leadership in Peking adopts a long-range, pragmatic and international approach to education and economics.<sup>2</sup> Post-Mao education is, in short, one that transcends the strictly moral-political and intellectual parameter of socialist

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<sup>1</sup> See e.g., Mitch Meisner, "Dazhai: The Mass Line in Practice," in Modern China, Vol. 4, No. 1, Jan. 1978, pp. 27-61.

<sup>2</sup> See Teng's speech at the National Educational Work Conference. Translation in Peking Review, No. 3, May 5, 1978, p. 10.

education (as discussed in Chapter II, pp. 14-43) and points directly to the economic implications of the "four modernizations." This educational reorientation does not, however, necessarily mean a complete return of the academic or revisionist system. The basic features of the Maoist revolutionary education such as "politics in command" and "integration of education and labour" still remain in principle if not in practice.

A reinterpretation of these revolutionary concepts appears to have been well under way in order to adapt them to the demands of new situations in China. While formal education is more heavily stressed at present, the "irregular" or parallel programs are viewed as an indispensable part of the system. The rustication of young people for productive labour meets concrete economic goals. Within the academic community itself, the leadership of the Communist Party remains the unquestionable principle. In general, the status of intellectuals is rising and a system of individual responsibility has been declared, making each individual more accountable for his performance.<sup>1</sup>

No doubt, the Maoist educational model has made positive contributions by attempting to eradicate the undesirable elements inherent in an elite educational system and stress the moral and political imperatives of learning in the light of local needs of the day. Its revolutionary appeals have assisted in eliminating

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<sup>1</sup>See above, Administration of Education, pp. 90-95.

the domination of intellectuals in education, which has not been challenged for too long. But, the needs of contemporary China to industrialize herself will necessitate an educational policy which must go beyond the concept of self-reliance in favour of an option informed by intellectual development and international cooperation. Apparently, the new leadership has embarked upon a selective continuation of Maoist policies, while modifying its more radical aspects to fit contemporary requirements.

The post-Mao educational formula, evolved from more than a decade of experimentations, would be one that is more intellectual than the radical Maoist line, but more revolutionary than that of the early 1960s. A new educational formula, however, is not a simple and permanent prescription. Changing policy priorities and emphases require constant adjustments. Only frequent and genuine compromises and accommodation within the Party leadership and academic community appear to be the realistic course leading China to the year 2000 of modernization.

### III. The Problems of Educational Reform

The implementation of educational reform in China now poses a challenge to the wisdom of the new leadership. The formulation of educational ideals, whether they are moral-political or intellectual, is quite different from the concrete fulfillment of those ideals. Whether these values will be achieved or lost



depends to a great degree on how they are transformed into realities through specific measures.\* Above all, policies are construed and are applied by and to people who are not without shortcomings.

In China, educational policies are related to and derived from the broader national politics; when national policy priority changes, educational policy would be affected accordingly. It is significant but not surprising that after nearly thirty years under a communist regime, the unification of China remains incomplete; the issues of "factionalism, provincialism, regionalism, mountain-topism" continue to baffle the Chinese society. Given the massive size of this society, both in area and in population, one would not expect the process of nation-building to have been achieved quickly or easily despite the rich heritage of a single great cultural legacy. Moreover, the Chinese people have frequently exacerbated their problems; the Cultural Revolution is a recent example.

It does not come as a surprise when disagreements between the two most influential Chinese leaders, Chairman Hua Kuo-feng and Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping, were reported recently.<sup>1</sup> Although the differences may reflect divergences of temperament and policy preferences rather than outright ideological incompatibility and the bitter confrontations of the Cultural Revolution, they may

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, David Bonavia, "Hint of Distant Thunder," in Far Eastern Economic Review, June 23, 1978, p. 19.

raise the fear among the people at all levels that all is not well within the leadership and therefore influence their policy decisions. The lingering fear of intra-party struggles during the past decade has by no means disappeared from the political scene. Political competitions among the Chinese leaders have, indeed, carried over into the sphere of education.

The first significant sign of disagreements between high-ranking Party leaders emerged when Chairman Hua Kuo-feng addressed the National Science Conference held in Peking on March 24, 1978,<sup>1</sup> seemingly challenging a program conducted by Vice-Premier Teng Hsiao-ping to relegate political study and produce quickly a technical elite to save the economy. Hua's speech seems to suggest that he is not entirely in agreement with the line being pursued under Teng's direction and may in years hence, after the economy got stronger, assert his opinion against his older colleagues like Teng, who now appears to be in control.

The recent disagreements stemmed from the age-old issue of elitism in education. No doubt, there has been a strong tendency towards educational elitism since the passing of Mao. The post-Mao revival of educational elitism, which is usually associated with Teng's approach of modernization, would involve serious political and ideological consequences that are implicit in Hua's

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<sup>1</sup>Translation in Peking Review, No. 13, March 31, 1978, pp. 6-14.

speech, in which it was said:

We need mighty contingents for industry, agriculture, science and technology, culture and national defence.... It won't do to have only a small number or a section of the people; hundreds of millions of people, the entire Chinese nation, must reach a much higher level.<sup>1</sup>

Hua's assertion against elitism came six days after Teng reaffirmed the new policy in a separate speech to the National Science Conference in Peking, in which Teng insisted:

We must...take up the important task of training in the shortest possible time a group of experts in science and technology who are first rate by world standards.<sup>2</sup>

It was the first time Hua had clearly differed with the more experienced Teng on educational policy in the first eight months they have ruled at the top of the post-Mao Chinese Government. The problem of educational reform is not unique in the post-Mao era. During and after the Cultural Revolution, there were numerous complaints by the Chinese officials about such "scornful" attitudes as "to study is of no use" and "to teach is dangerous."<sup>3</sup> After the purge of the Gang of Four, the readjustment in education was considered an emergent task confronting the new leaders. The development of education in the years ahead will be fraught with

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Translation in Peking Review, No. 12, March 24, 1978, p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Theodore H. Chen, The Maoist Educational Revolution (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1974), Chapters 5, 6 & 8.

considerable uncertainties. A major stumbling block lies in the fact that the values of education in the seventeen years preceeding the Cultural Revolution have not been confirmed or recognized. The ease with which post-Mao educational reform can be achieved depends on a complete overturn of the indictments in the "two-estimates" devised by the Gang of Four.<sup>1</sup> This has proved a difficult work for the new leadership and that is why the first post-Mao university enrollment had been postponed until the end of 1977, while it was used to begin in June previously.

The recruitment of university students was clouded by the after-effects of the Cultural Revolution. Conceivably, an education system based primarily on academic merits runs directly counter to Mao's revolutionary line. A meritocratic approach inherently favours urban over rural students and those from cultured family backgrounds over those of the less educated homes. There have been reports of conflicts at the prestigious Peking University between students enrolled on the basis of examination and others admitted by virtue of their political credentials in favour until recently. The new students tend to harass the old ones and label them as "country bumpkins."<sup>2</sup> Such student conflicts may be attributed to the sudden change of the social structure of the university as a

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter III, the Problem of Intellectuals: An Overview, pp. 54-59.

<sup>2</sup> FBIS: PRC, March 22, 1978, p. E/10.

result of the new enrollment system. Chinese educators have expressed concern over the possible damage that this student hostility on campus may cause to the whole education system.

Problems arise when major policy readjustments now in practice have come into conflict with the personal interests of some important segments of the population. Many young teachers who for years devoted their talents to mastering the political work assigned them are no longer qualified to teach the new educational curriculum and may therefore find their career prospects severely threatened.<sup>1</sup> Young people who answered to the radical's repeated appeals to rebel against authority are now being disciplined for their past recalcitrance. Students who obediently went to the countryside after graduation from middle schools during the early 1970s now find themselves seriously disadvantaged in competing for the coveted university places in the strengthened higher educational system. The leadership has expressed considerable alarm over the general dissatisfaction among these rusticated youths about the new admission regulations.<sup>2</sup> Then, there is the social impact of sending a large number of gifted young students abroad to study in

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<sup>1</sup>The same is true for personnel in the Party Committees. The new leadership has made it clear that personnel put in charge of scientific research institutions solely by virtue of their political qualifications must now be replaced by Party cadres who also have scientific training and expertise. See, for example, Peking Review, No. 12, March 24, 1978, pp. 9-18.

<sup>2</sup>Hsinhua News Agency, October 20, 1977 & Jen-min Jih-pao (editorial), October 20, 1977. Both translated in FBIS: PRC, October 21, 1977, pp. E/1-7.

the capitalist world, with the result that this cultural change would be reinforced by a technological change brought about by more and more international contacts of science and technology. This acceleration of foreign contacts will inevitably pose a challenge to Mao's concept of self-reliance which is, in essence, a rejection of the assumptions that "the moon looks better over foreign lands" and "China can only creep along in the wake of other countries."<sup>1</sup>

Recently, some Chinese people have voiced their grievances about the values of the renewed college enrollment system and on many occasions such questions are put forward for public discussion: "Does the provision that 'the workers and peasants and their children have priority of education' still stand?"; "Must we consider the general task for the new period and at the same time carry out the class line?"<sup>2</sup> A certain segment of society held that the new method of enrollment could not truly represent the interests of the workers and peasants. They also had their own definitions of the criteria for "political screening," the principle of selecting the best and evaluation of intellectuals.

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<sup>1</sup>Contrary to the Party policy currently being pursued, Chairman Hua Kuo-feng mentioned both these two phrases in his speech to the National Science Conference. Hua revived both these phrases, which clearly reflected his pro-Mao position. See translation in FBIS: PRC, March 27, 1978, p. E/6.

<sup>2</sup>Kuang-ming Jih-pao, May 24, 1978, p. 1; Peking Review, No. 30, July 28, 1978, pp. 18-22.

The present practice of selecting the best will certainly raise the fear of "putting scores in command," which tends to stratify the education system, thereby widening the three major gaps between town and country, worker and peasant, and between mental and manual labour. The new policy requires students to have a senior middle school education to qualify for the university entrance examination. This would, in effect, automatically discriminate against the vast majority of rural youths who still do not complete middle school.

Public resistance to official policy has by no means been overcome. What the Chinese press allows us to glimpse of the controversy between educational policy-makers and their critics suggests that the positions of the former are expressed in terms of two themes. The first and easier to attack is nostalgia for elitist higher education: if the university produces only middle-level cadres and ordinary workers, who is to train the senior cadres and scientists? The second theme primarily points out that the education system in the past had not been making adequate preparation for the future, relying too much on heavy and obsolete procedures (manual work at any price, etc.) without building up the intellectual potential required to carry China into the leading ranks of the world before the end of the century by means of a rapid and autonomous process of modernization as decided by the Party and Government. In other words, the past neglect of intellectual

education must now be rectified. This position is, however, being questioned by its critics who try to assimilate the second theme to the first in order to discredit it as being a mere justification for elitist education, but, as far as the basic problem is concerned, they can only put forward moral-political arguments which, the new leadership believes, are not so convincing in the post-Mao context.<sup>1</sup>

The expansion of elitist education will, no doubt, foster rising expectations inside and outside the school. More and more young Chinese intellectuals may aspire to greater material comfort, gradually losing their revolutionary fervor as the experience of the Chinese Revolution passes into history. Then, there may be the danger that while the school will continue to impart moral-political values and create an egalitarian climate in society, the re-structured socioeconomic institutions may be hard pressed to measure up to egalitarian standards. Increased levels of education may motivate more Chinese people to demand less repression and wider scope for individual initiatives or even challenge the Government to proceed to even more revisionistic concessions than it has already granted.

Problems are compounded by the massive re-introduction of formal examinations to the education system, which raises the fear of corruption and cheating.<sup>2</sup> Within the school itself,

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapters II & III, pp. 14-66.

<sup>2</sup> Jen-min Jih-pao, March 19, 1978, p. 2.



educational authorities have shown grave concern at the lack of appropriate teaching materials and teachers. It is no secret that school-teaching became a dreaded profession since the Cultural Revolution. The teachers' ranks have been so well "purified" that some schools are very short-staffed. The remaining teachers are so much afraid of being accused by the students that they dare not enforce any kind of discipline. Now discipline has returned to the classrooms, but the lingering fears of maltreatment by students have prevented them from returning to the schools confidently.

While these baffling problems would continue to grow, tremendous efforts are being made by the authorities to explain away any contradictions within the ideology that the current educational reform may cause. It is impossible at the moment to predict where the present development will lead. Similar situations in the educational field preceeded the Cultural Revolution. There are, however, reasonable grounds to believe that the Chinese leadership at this stage would seek to avoid any serious disruptions, particularly since it has just begun to recover from factional fighting and economic troubles in 1976. The transitional crisis has reached a first stage of temporary accommodation but it is by no means over.

#### IV. The Role and Problem of Intellectuals

##### In Post-Mao Education

The role of intellectuals in developing socialist states is a controversial one in spite of the great importance which is attached to it.<sup>1</sup> In China now, in a period when tremendous efforts are being made to break away from underdevelopment and upgrade economic growth, there is a particularly strong tendency for experts, technicians and bureaucrats to constitute an elite stratum. Obviously, this trend will not be allowed to grow in China, which still calls herself socialist. It would be improper to blame the current educational reform entirely for the growth of elitism, for the education system alone cannot create or eradicate such a situation. But it does have a correlation with the larger society; its problems are both a cause and a corollary of wider social problems--a contradiction between social and economic goals.

The present leadership is strongly convinced that a massive reinstatement of intellectuals is a necessary prerequisite for quality education and international cooperation. Modern economic development, as Shannon Brown put it:

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., T. Bottomore, Elite and Society (Penguin Books Ltd., 1971), p. 69-72; Sylvia Chan, "Political Assessment of Intellectuals Before the Cultural Revolution," in Asian Survey, No. 9, September 1978, pp. 891-911.

is increasingly dependent upon technological change. This is not to deny the importance to the growth process of other contributions, such as those of capital accumulation and education, but even these seemingly separate inputs often serve in large part as vehicles for technological change.<sup>1</sup>

The achievement of some measure of technological change requires increased international cooperation in terms of intellectual exchanges and the purchase of foreign plants and equipment.

Above all, it will require some reforms in the education system in order to enhance the employment and development of new technology.

A large-scale re-deployment of both human and material resources would contribute to this end. Large-scale technological change will, of course, heavily tax the economic system and create serious social and ideological problems. As John Friedman underlined: "One of the signs of the disintegration of a social order is the widely felt loss of moral direction."<sup>2</sup> This moral dislocation found among the Chinese masses nowadays is whether or not the labouring people still constitute the mainstream of society, or, more specifically, their children would have equal if not better opportunities to education. Unless an ideological rationalization is accepted by a sufficiently large proportion of the population, it is not beyond reasons to speak of a second Cultural Revolution in China.

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<sup>1</sup> Shannon Brown, "Foreign Technology and Economic Growth," in Problems of Communism, July-August, 1977, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> John Friedman, "Intellectuals in Developing Countries," in Kyklos, Vol. XIII, 1960, p. 531.

It is at this juncture that the Chinese intellectuals have taken upon themselves the challenge and opportunities of creating a new moral order, namely, the "four modernizations" (agriculture, industry, national defence and science and technology.) In China now, there has emerged a new ideology of economic development. The dissemination of this ideology has become one of the overriding concerns of China's intellectuals, who have been put in complete charge of the revamped education system. Through the educational system, economic progress is something to be achieved and sustained on the basis of an adequate ideology.

The Party strongly believes that, in its desperate need for highly-skilled experts and technicians, the intellectuals, even of doubtful character, must be put immediately in the service of the new social order. It cannot wait until a new intellectual proletariat can be raised. What is more important is that of using the intellectuals while keeping them under strict control by the Party. Some measure of power has to be delegated to them, however, in order to improve the quality of education and economic efficiency. This concession of power to the intellectuals is limited and does not mean that the Party would be ready to share political control with the, but only that under the new policy the workers and peasants are urged to "unite with," "educate" and "remould" them. Unity is viewed as the starting point of this dialectical relationship of thought transformation.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Peking Review, No. 12, March 18, 1977, p. 20.

It has become increasingly clear, however, that the Party is more interested in uniting with than educating or remoulding the intellectuals. The revolutionary contradictions within the Chinese intelligentsia are expected to be resolved through intensified mass campaigns and ideological innovations.<sup>1</sup> Political socialization is a lengthy process and bourgeois intellectuals cannot be converted overnight. In the meantime, the Party appears to be more concerned about winning over those intellectuals who are still holding a vacillating position on socialist revolution. In doing so, it is necessary to create favorable conditions for them to relinquish their neutralist position and take a more active role in educational affairs. Thus far, the leadership has achieved considerable success and appeared to have embarked upon an alternative route to the Chinese Revolution, which puts greater emphasis on an efficient education system and a powerful economic base. The leadership role of the intellectuals in this respect will, therefore, explain both the spirit and substance of China's current educational reform.

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<sup>1</sup> See above, Chapter III, The Problem of Intellectuals: An Overview, pp. 54-59; Teng Hsiao-ping's speech at the National Science Conference in Peking Review, No. 12, March 24, 1978, p. 9.

## CHAPTER VII

### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

#### I. Ideological Reorientation

- (1) Post-Mao China is experiencing an ideological reorientation and rationalization (to stress differing values, justify new programs and explain new situations), a tendency towards a selective rejection of the radical Maoist revolutionary exploits and an adoption of a pragmatic, rationalist stance. (See above, pp. 110-114.)
- (2) Maoism is replaced by revisionist Marxism in the social and economic sectors. But, some measure of Maoism is retained to the extent that it constitutes a source of moral incentive for production. (See above, pp. 114-115.)
- (3) Political revolution has been held back, to be replaced by a new revolution in economic development, science and technology. (p. 112.)
- (4) Socialist values in education remain unchallengeable objectives. But, priority has been accorded intellectual rather than moral-political components of the education system. Policy dispute is about priorities rather than the fundamental principles of communism. The current reform in education is a selective adoption of Mao's revolutionary ideas that are compatible with the current movement of national modernization. (pp. 110-113.)

- (5) In post-Mao China's striving for more and more production, the moral values or "liberating potential" of modern technology and automation have been ignored, probably on the understanding that it must be so in a less developed economy. (See Chapter II, pp. 35, 36 & 114.)

II. Educational Reform in Response  
to Changes in Economic Strategy

- (1) The new leadership is convinced of the necessity of a strong economic base upon which to construct socialism. Education and political ideology must serve the "four modernizations." (p. 116.)
- (2) Academic excellence becomes more important and political qualifications less necessary. Manual labour and "open-door" schooling are reduced in favour of the full-time regular schools. (pp. 120; 122-123; 124-125.)
- (3) The new college enrollment system tends to generate the amalgamation of political and intellectual elites who are committed to economic and social progress as they envision it. The result is growth of "professionalism" and bureaucratization. (pp. 120, 121 & 122.)

- (4) The necessity to produce high-quality technologists and scientists tends to favour gifted children over others, to the detriment of the egalitarian ideals. (pp. 114 & 116.)
- (5) Social and economic inequalities will be tolerated in the interest of national modernization. The two-track system of full-time school and work-study school is being reinstated. Informal schooling has not been abolished because it meets specific economic needs by producing more middle-level technicians and educational needs by providing continued training on the job. (pp. 116-117; 124-125.)
- (6) The new leadership intends to universalize primary education and expand secondary education and recognizes their implications for intellectual and economic development. Rustication will continue for young people who have left the school. (pp. 117-118; 107-108 & 125; 121.)
- (7) Local variations of educational administration encouraged during the Cultural Revolution are replaced by nationwide centralization and standardization. A system of division of labour and personal responsibility has returned to the school. (pp. 93 & 126.)



### III. The Problems of Educational Reform

- (1) Disagreements within the leadership group concerning policy priorities between egalitarianism and elitism pose problems for the implementation of educational reform. Problems may arise from the unresolved issue of the "two-estimates" which allegedly accused the intellectuals of domination in education and neglect of Mao's line during the seventeen years preceeding the Cultural Revolution. (pp. 127-128; 130; Chapter III. pp. 54-59; 131.)
- (2) The current practice of sending a large number of talented young students abroad to study creates social and ideological problems. Added to these problems are the effects of technological change brought about by massive imports of foreign science and technology and the increased international intellectual exchange. (pp. 132-133.)
- (3) The current reform does not seem to address itself to the problems of the so-called "three-gaps" between town and country, agriculture and industry, and mental and manual labour. (pp 131; 133-134.)
- (4) Major policy readjustments tend to be in conflict with the personal interests of some major sectors of the population such as young teachers, workers, peasants, and rusticated youth. (p. 132.)

- (5) The new enrollment system which entails formal examinations puts the vast majority of labouring people at a disadvantage and raises the fear of corruption and cheating. (pp. 131 & 135.)
- (6) The existing supply of teaching materials and teachers cannot cope with the demands of the revamped education system which favours rigorous academic studies rather than practical experiences. (pp. 135-136.)
- (7) The current reform creates a sudden change in both the social structure and academic standards of the school, which tends to stratify the education system and cause frictions between teachers and students. (pp. 131-132,)
- (8) The expansion of elitist education will foster rising expectations inside and outside the school in terms of material well-being and civil rights. (p. 135.)

#### IV. The Role and Problem of Intellectuals in Post-Mao Education

- (1) There is a strong tendency for scholars, experts, technicians and bureaucrats to form an elite stratum. (p. 137.)
- (2) The utilization and development of new technology require a massive reinstatement of intellectuals to their posts, which might create serious social and ideological conflicts.  
(pp 137, 138 & 139.)

- (3) In the present educational reform, the leadership role of the intellectuals alone should not be blamed for the growth of elitism, for this problem is both a cause and a result of wider social maladies. (p. 137.)
- (4) The loss of moral direction among the masses due to the educational reform threatens the social and political stability. The intellectual is in a position to provide a sense of moral direction: the achievement of the "four modernizations" at all cost. An adequate political and economic ideology would contribute to this end..(p. 138).
- (5) Discipline has returned to the classroom; the intellectuals have regained their lost respect and authority. The status of the intellectuals is rising. (p. 139-140.)
- (6) Intellectuals are still required to acquire a correct socialist world outlook. The guidance of the Party in all spheres of work remains the unchallengeable principle. (pp. 139-140.)

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