

YENAN PRINCIPLES IN CHINESE EDUCATION

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ALICE MUSZYNSKI
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Department of ANTHROPOLOGY & SOCIOLOGY

The University of British Columbia
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ABSTRACT

The educational system in China today has its roots in the Yen'an period (1937-1945). This thesis surveys that period with the purpose of discovering how the principles underlying education came to be formed. It then goes on to describe how those principles were implemented in the 1940's. The chief concept around which the educational system came to be based was the 'mass line'.

During the 1950's and early 1960's, education as envisaged in the Yen'an years had to compete with another system - one modelled upon that of the Soviet Union. The thesis explores this struggle between what was essentially 'two lines' in education. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which erupted full-scale in 1966, was, as far as the educational sphere was concerned, a reaffirmation of the principles developed in the Yen'an era. The thesis concludes with this movement, describing the more important of the educational policies and how they were to be implemented. Although specific policies and their implementation might differ from those of the Yen'an years, the principles are still the same, especially that of the 'mass line'.

It is suggested that the model of education developed in China since the Yen'an era is one that is relevant for other countries of the Third World, although implementation may be impossible without social revolution.

This thesis is based on research in the library, and was limited to English-language translations and secondary sources.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The focus of this thesis is education. This area was chosen in the belief that the educational system of a society mirrors its goals and, to a lesser degree, its nature. Until the Chinese experience, education in most countries has, in recent years, followed closely the lead of the great capitalist nations – the Western model. Even the Soviet Union has a system of education which closely parallels that of the West. In part, this reflects its concern with industrialization and modernization, that is, with economic development. Most Third-World countries are caught up in this orientation. There is one notable exception – the 'Maoist' model. The term 'Maoist' is here used to distinguish the model of education envisaged by Mao at Yen-an from the educational system as it existed in China prior to Communist take-over, and from the 'Liuist line' followed in the 1950's and early 1960's, which was closely patterned on the educational system of the Soviet Union.

There is a stress on Yen-an in the following chapters. It was at Yen-an that Mao first developed the concepts which would prove crucial in shaping education in the communist base areas, and in all of China in the years following Liberation. Mao's principle contribution in the educational sphere was his concept of the 'mass line'. This notion raised some fundamental questions as far as education was concerned: whom should education serve and for what purposes? The answers are provided in the ideas behind 'mass line': education should be for the masses and it should serve their needs. Political education is important, because it explains the policies and principles of government to the

masses and tries to show them how their local needs are tied in with those of the larger society. Peoples' needs, other than such basic ones as food and shelter, are relative to the society in which they live. In China, they are relative to communist ideology as it is put into practice every day. It is not within the scope of this thesis to deal with that ideology and how it shapes and fulfills needs. The main argument here is that Chinese communist education, because it does not use education in the Western world as its model, has had a unique development, one in keeping with communist ideology. This development has made education in China today very different from that in most other countries of the world. As such, it challenges the notion that the Western educational system is the only system possible for a poor country which hopes to industrialize.

The term 'mass' is used throughout in preference to the term 'people'. 'People', jen min in Chinese, includes not only workers and peasants, but also other sectors of the population, such as the bourgeoisie. 'Mass', kuan chung, is narrower in scope, referring primarily to workers and peasants. Mass education is thus education primarily for the benefit of workers and peasants, which groups constitute the majority of the Chinese population. These were the groups which were excluded from the educational system in imperial and Kuomintang China. Only the groups who had power and wealth - the elites (who in traditional China included the landlords, the scholar officials, and rulers, such as the Manchus and the warlords, depending on the era) - could hope to receive education. Peasants and workers were not barred from the educational system, but in practice, few members of these classes ever actually received one.

With the Communist takeover, the traditional elite did not disappear overnight. As China began to industrialize, a bourgeoisie had also begun to form, acquiring wealth

and power and, thus, elite status. The Communists had to be constantly on guard lest these groups regain the power and wealth they were so accustomed to having. Because these groups held authority (or institutionalized power) in the eyes of many workers and peasants, the possibility of their regaining their lost positions was immense. In the countryside, where gentry rule (which was rule by a combination of landlords and scholar officials) had been prevalent for so many centuries, there were enormous difficulties involved in having education penetrate village levels and reach the peasantry.

When the Communists came to power, a danger that two new elites could arise and subvert revolutionary goals developed. The cadres are, above all, leaders. They do not have to be Party members, although many of them are. They take on leadership roles at all levels – from the village all the way up to Party and government headquarters. They are a heterogeneous group: a cadre can be anyone from an illiterate peasant to a highly-trained intellectual. The main danger as far as cadres are concerned is that they become divorced from the population. This is possible when a high degree of bureaucratization sets in – when jobs become highly routinized and responsibility flows upward to the command centres, while commands flow downward. In such a situation, cadres become oriented more towards their superiors than to the people they are serving. There has been much stress in China on keeping bureaucratic trends at a minimum. Cadres are also given much attention. One part of the educational system, the cadre schools, is devoted to training them for their leadership roles.

The second group, the intellectuals, has proved more problematic. These are the people who have more education and skills than the average Chinese peasant or worker.

Many, although not all, are cadres. Because they possess something which is in demand, especially technical skills, and which is scarce, there is a danger that they will set themselves above the people and form a 'ruling class'. There have been many efforts to prevent this from happening. The following chapters describe the more important ones, such as rectification and hsia fang. Efforts have been made to integrate cadres with intellectuals, melding the concepts of 'red' and 'expert'. Efforts have also been made to integrate those two groups with the workers and peasants, thus 'proletarianizing the intellectuals' while 'intellectualizing the proletariat', to the benefit of all concerned.

Chapter two deals with why the principles behind mass education were developed. The third chapter is concerned with their implementation in the Yen'an period, while the last chapter is concerned with the problems of their implementation in the 1950's and 1960's - until the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution reaffirmed the primacy and importance of the 'mass line'.

CHAPTER TWO

Social and Educational Revolution in the Yen'an Era

The basic premise of this thesis is that the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was a reaffirmation of principles first developed during the Yen'an era. It is the task of this chapter to set forth the conditions which led the Chinese Communist leadership to develop and adopt these principles and to examine the way education was to fit into the revolutionary transformation of rural society.

By the time the Long March was completed, and Yen'an established as the Capital of the Chinese Soviet Government, a number of important events had occurred. Mao Tse-tung was now the leader of the Chinese Communist movement and, in the immediate future, his views and policies would prevail. For a number of years he had concentrated on the peasantry as the main potential force for unleashing social and political revolution.¹ However, the failure of the Kiangsi Soviet had taught the Communists that economic revolution must proceed more cautiously for at least the time being. Above all, it must not turn the middle peasants against the poor peasants, causing the former to reject revolution and fight on the side of landlord and rich-peasant interests.

In "the Shensi base it was not nationalistic rhetoric but agrarian revolution, implemented widely in 1935 and developed along more moderate lines during 1936, that

¹ Stuart Schram dates this discovery of the peasantry's potential for revolution at 1925 with the growth of the Hunanese peasant movement. When Mao was forced to leave Hunan, he became head of the Peasant Movement Training Institute, under Kuomintang control during the period of the First United Front with the Communists. From that time onward, Mao increasingly became involved in organizing the peasantry. See Stuart Schram, Mao Tse-Tung (Penguin Books, Great Britain, 1970), pp. 81-103.

initially won wide-spread support and paved the way for the increasingly effective military and political participation of the rural population."² Land revolution, rather than wiping out class distinctions, eliminated the grossest forms of inequality and exploitation. Rather than a small landlord-commercial elite on the one hand, and a mass of tenants, hired laborers, and poor peasants on the other, there was a shift on both sides towards the middle. "If the most important former class distinction had differentiated the economic elite from the poor, after land revolution in 1939 the most important distinction was between poor and middle peasants, both striving to secure a meagre livelihood" (*ibid*, p. 83).

The condition of the poor peasants and hired laborers was due more to methods of production and the natural environment than to debt, taxation, or lack of good land. Peasant participation had been secured through land revolution, but changes in production were needed to raise living standards. These changes had to wait through the United Front period until the 1943 production movement and the campaign to reduce rent and interest were launched in the wake of the rectification movement in 1942-44. Agrarian revolution would once again be pursued in earnest only in 1947, with the promulgation of the Draft Agrarian Law, when the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) took the offensive against the Kuomintang (KMT).

The struggle against the gentry proved easier than the task of uniting the peasantry, of educating them to see that any divisions within their ranks were minor to class divisions and that, therefore, poor and middle peasants should learn to cooperate with

² Mark Selden, The Yen-an Way in Revolutionary China, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1971, p. 79.

each other. Their main weapon was their numbers and, therefore, unity was crucial. They had to be taught that extreme egalitarianism, or extreme democracy, was wrong.

After 1927, Kuomintang strength had made it necessary for the Communists to start revolution in places least accessible to Nationalist forces. Regions bordering on several provinces tended to offer security. In the North-West, such a border area had been established under the leadership of Liu Chih-tan and Kao Kang. The Wei valley, the most fertile area in the region, was captured by the Kuomintang, leaving the partisans with a very poor and primitive area in northern Shensi province, isolated from the rest of China and from the world at large. But the partisans had developed a communist base area there along lines very similar to those developed by Mao in Kiangsi. The two main themes were reliance on the peasantry and the importance of guerrilla tactics in fighting warlord and Nationalist armies. Both Mao and Liu Chih-tan had come under repeated fire from top Party leadership on both these lines. The 'Russian Returned Students', a clique which dominated the Chinese Communist Party until the Tsunyi Conference, following the comintern line, believed in concentrating on the urban proletariat, on the capture of cities, and on more conventional methods of warfare (ibid, p. 60). This is why Mao's ascendancy to power was very important, not only for the outcome of the revolution, but also for the nature and course that it would develop.

Mao and Liu Chih-tan differed from the Central Committee on a number of points. For example, both recruited and used secret society members, bandits, and other "floating elements" (ibid., p. 26) against the orders of the Central Committee. Both Mao and Liu recognized the revolutionary potential of these groups, unlike the Communist leadership

which had little knowledge of, or experience with, these groups or, for that matter, with life in the rural areas.

"The Kuomintang's counter-revolutionary coup of 1927 shifted the focus of revolution from the city to the countryside and, in rural China, to remote and inaccessible backwaters. Driven underground, the peasant movement could develop subsequently only as a movement of armed partisans. In the process, a new geography of revolution was defined" (*ibid.*, p. 36). It was this difference which made it crucial that the revolution change from one based on the urban proletariat to a revolution based in the countryside. Peasant mobilization and participation were crucial in order that such a revolution be victorious. It was Mao who recognized this shift in revolutionary politics. The Central Committee, based in Shanghai until 1932, remained committed to revolution along traditional Soviet lines.

One final fact had emerged and came to dominate all others by the end of 1936, the year Yanan was taken and established as the capital of the soviet government. This was the inevitability of war with Japan and the necessity of a united front among all sectors of the Chinese people in order to fight the war successfully.

Following the Sian Incident and the end of civil war, a policy called New Democracy was proclaimed, and Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia was declared a model area. This border region was the only one immune to heavy fighting for a few years, and so political and economic programs could be attempted there with minimum dislocations due to war (*ibid.*, p. 122). From 1937 to 1941 the main task of the policy called New Democracy was administrative stability. This was largely taken care of by the government bureaucracy.

Because of the United Front, the necessity of going slow with land revolution was translated into Party policy. Not only the middle peasants, but all patriotic rich peasants and landlords had to be incorporated into a united front. This posed a dilemma. It had been found that the only way of winning the peasantry to the communist cause was through land revolution. Once peasants had personally participated in this event, they were committed to revolution. They often had no choice. Once the landlords were killed or forced to flee and the old system of government overthrown, they had to band together and cooperate with the communist leadership in order to prevent a return of the exploiting classes. Land redistribution tended to lead to the alienation of the middle peasants. They were often branded as part of the exploiting class, and their land was taken from them. As they constituted a sizable proportion of the peasantry in the north, and as they were closer to the poor peasants in their way of life than to the rich peasants and landlords, it was important that the Communists gain their allegiance. This was often made difficult by the fact that these areas were very poor and, thus, there was not enough land and material resources to raise the living standard of all the poor and landless peasants to that approaching middle-peasant status.³

The peasants were now asked to cooperate with their class enemies in order to fight a war in which many of them were not directly involved. This was especially true of the Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia Border Region, of which Yen-an was the capital, and which was not directly involved in the fighting until 1941. In those areas where land revolution had been successful, the peasantry tended to resent United Front policy, and fear the return of the landlords and rich peasants. It proved, in fact, difficult to curb the power of the

³ William Hinton, Fanshen A Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese Village, Vintage Books, New York, 1966, pp. 400-410.

returned landlords and rich peasants.

The necessity of explaining such concepts as united front while simultaneously preparing a largely illiterate and politically uninvolved peasantry for social revolution placed an enormous task on the Communist Party. The 1937 election campaign was one method used to spread and explain Party policy while eliciting peasant participation. "The 1937 election movement illustrates a central dilemma facing communist leadership not only in Yen'an but in the other wartime base areas and after 1949 as well. This was the tension between the desire to utilize the skills and influence of privileged elements, notable landlords and rich peasants, and the desire to curb their power in order to bar the threat that such groups might subvert the revolution" (Selden, p. 131). The Second United Front⁴ caused the Communists to seek two diverging goals. On the one hand, they sought to include the traditional elite and to realize mild socio-economic and political reforms. On the other hand, they were trying to strengthen their hold over the whole region, and to build upon a poor peasant base. It was only out of the crisis that had developed by 1941 that a clear-cut way was found to deal with this situation: to educate the peasantry to participate in revolution and to help it perceive and understand both the short-term and long-range goals of the Communist Party, while curbing the power of elites and would-be elites.

(I)n 1936, the Party adopted a program in which the idea of a united front was the basis for limited economic reform and political mobilization. In the years 1937 to 1940 that policy was spectacularly successful nationally. Starting from a tenuous and isolated position in remote northern Shensi, by 1940 the Communists dominated important areas throughout North China and posed the dominant threat to Japanese aspirations for conquest. But the very success of that program undermined its basis: rapid expansion precipitated

⁴ The First United Front was established in 1923 (Selden, p. 22).

sharp clashes with the Japanese and the Kuomintang. In 1941, following the Communists' successful Hundred Regiments offensive in North China, the brunt of the Japanese attack shifted to the Communists. Under this assault, the population in Communist areas shrank by almost half... The breakdown with the KMT was felt acutely in Shen-Kan-Ning. The KMT blockade of the border region, initiated in 1939, was tightened in 1941 following the clash of Communist and KMT forces in the new Fourth Army incident. Moreover, just as the Communists were feeling the pinch of blockade and military defeat, the central government cut off the subsidy provided since 1937 for the Eighth Route Army and administration of the border region.

The reverses of 1941 and 1942 revealed the weaknesses and limitations of the movement to that time. Without outside financial support from the central government, in 1941 the Communists were forced to impose a crushing burden of taxation and military conscription on the people in Shen-Kan-Ning. As blockade contributed to economic strangulation and rampant inflation, the regular government announced an all-time high tax levy...more than doubling the previous year's total and compounding difficulties for the beleaguered peasant, including the poor and the new middle peasants who were the bulwark of Communist support. The crises of these years intensified the tensions and contradictions in Communist policy in governing the border region.⁵

Examination of mass education...is particularly valuable for the light it sheds on the evolution of the whole 'Yenan lifestyle' for, according to its own assessment, the Party made more mistakes in mass education than in any other endeavor. In the process of learning from and correcting these mistakes, it gained valuable experience in the application of a cardinal principle of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Movement - a revolution for the people must be carried out by the people.⁶

In late 1937 a second united front agreement was concluded between the KMT and the CCP. Although it enabled the CCP to operate as a legal party and allowed it to

⁵ Mark Selden, "The Yen'an Legacy: The Mass Line" in Chinese Communist Politics in Action, edited by A. Doak Barnett, University of Washington Press, Seattle & London, 1969, pp. 101-102.

⁶ Peter J. Seybolt, "The Yen'an Revolution in Mass Education", in The China Quarterly, 48, October/December 1971, p. 641.

consolidate and expand its area of operation behind Japanese lines, it also led to administrative bureaucracy and to a period of 'standardization'. By 1942 a peak in bureaucratic rationalization had been reached.⁷ Whereas cadre education was to benefit by many of the changes made in this period, in that educational institutions were formalized and unified under a specific set of goals and standards, mass education was seriously hampered. The cadres were the 'vanguard of the revolution' and, as such, had to be unified under a single authority and had to receive systematic training of an even quality. The education of the people, however, was an entirely different matter, although in these years the distinction was not made in practice.⁸

The early period witnessed a substantial rate of growth in the number of educational institutions, although there was little progress in the quality of their education. Difficulties in acquiring the necessary materials and a shortage of teaching staff did little to improve the quality of education. "The lack of popular enthusiasm for education was probably due in part to the conservatism of people unaccustomed to formal education; but resistance to changing old habits and attending schools was reinforced by the fact that the Border Region populace found the content of education irrelevant to their main concerns" (Seybolt, p. 649). Many complaints were received that education was too much concerned with politics and war rather than with the peasantry's immediate needs and interests.

⁷ Mark Selden, The Yenan Way in Revolutionary China, *op. cit.*, p. 648. Further references to Selden in this chapter will be in connection with this work.

⁸ In Chapter Three, the links between cadre education and mass education will be described, and the differences between the two drawn.

This situation led to changes in the form and content of education. The period of growth became one of 'standardization'.⁹ These changes first affected the education of cadres, and culminated in the cheng-feng campaign, (see footnote 14), which led to the re-organization and re-education of cadres, making them at once more responsive both to the Party and to the people in their charge. What worked well for cadre education, however, proved disastrous when applied to people's education.

(T)hose staffing the government education bureaucracy were mostly intellectuals who had come to the Border Region from the cities of East China... They tried to make schools in rural North-West China conform to the standards of those in Shanghai which, in turn, were copies of schools in industrialized western countries (Seybolt, p. 650).

The conclusion that the educational system suitable for countries with highly developed economic systems is not suitable for present day China, appears to be fairly obvious once it has been stated. But that is just the point. In practice people have tried to develop education in economically backward communities by copying the educational systems of economically advanced communities. The results have usually not been very satisfactory and the fundamental Marxian view that social institutions are all interrelated and basically influenced by economic organizations gave the clue to thinking out just why the results have been unsatisfactory.¹⁰

At this time, there was an attempt to make all schools conform to a similar pattern, even though they were established under different conditions. This aim was to

⁹ Ezra Vogel describes a similar period following Liberation in 1949. He, like Seybolt for these years during the Yen'an period, labels the early 1950's as a period of 'standardization'. This suggests that many of the problems and issues dealt with during the Yen'an years were to re-appear in magnified form after 1949. Thus, the argument that the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was a 'going back' to the principles evolved in Yen'an to meet these problems and issues is further reinforced. See The China Quarterly, 29, January-March, 1967, pp. 36-60, for Ezra Vogel's article: "From Revolutionary to Semi-Bureaucrat: The 'Regularization' of Cadres".

¹⁰ Michael Lindsay, Notes on Educational Problems in Communist China, 1941-47, International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations, New York, 1950, p. i.

be accomplished by "strengthening the administrative bureaucracy and increasing control from above" (Seybolt, p. 650). The Party, government and population had little control over the educational bureaucracy. This lack of control made the bureaucracy unresponsive to over-all planning or to local conditions and desires.

The most advanced schools became models for the rest. Teachers and students were to spend most of their time in the classroom. The standards for admitting students "became more elitist and oriented towards fulfilling future aspirations rather than present needs" (*ibid.*, p. 651). Students from well-to-do families who had little work experience tended to be given preference under such a system.

In 1942 orders were issued to amalgamate 'unhealthy' with 'healthy' schools. The largest and best schools became 'central elementary schools' and were to be given the best materials and teaching personnel. Most of the schools that were eliminated were situated in the countryside, while the model schools tended to be located in the largest towns. Although efforts were made to get peasants to send their children to school, these were largely unsuccessful.

The Party and Government were not sufficiently aware of mass needs and desires and they gave the people too little opportunity to speak and act for themselves. When this finally became apparent, a methodology for completely restructuring the relationship between the leadership and the people was devised. This was the mass line, designed to stimulate mass initiative and release mass energies in pursuit of mass liberation (*ibid.*, p. 655).

The United Front period was never a stable one. Breaches were continuously made on both sides, and open fighting between the two parties broke out in 1941, just when the Japanese began escalating their attacks against the Communists, employing the

especially brutal policy of 'kill all, burn all, loot all' in their attempt to break guerilla resistance.¹¹ Not only did the Kuomintang withdraw all financial support from the CCP, it imposed a very harsh economic blockade around the border regions. This, together with the escalated Japanese attacks, led to a crisis situation. The border regions were now forced to be totally self-sufficient, militarily and economically. The term 'people's war' was applied to the economic and social spheres. Out of this crisis was born the concept of the 'mass line' and the slogan 'from the people, to the people'.

The approach to the crisis had two facets. The rectification movement of 1942-1944 spelled out a number of principles which were adopted in a series of campaigns.¹² The rectification movement was aimed at the re-education of cadres and intellectuals.

Many of the cadres had become divorced from the people and from the movement they were supposed to be serving. Many were becoming bureaucrats whose chief task was handing down directives from higher to lower levels within specific departments. Many cadres were insensitive to the problems experienced at township and village levels and did not see the need of coordinating their work with the tasks of other departments. Thus, the Communist Party and government, headquartered in Yenan, were not reaching the peasants. The solution to this problem lay in the concept of the 'mass line'.

¹¹ Chalmers A. Johnson, Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power, Stanford University Press, California, 1962, pp. 55-60.

¹² In addition to the rectification movement, there were:

- (a) the campaign for crack troops and simple administration (1941-43)
- (b) the 'to-the-village' campaign (1941-42)
- (c) the campaign for the reduction of rent and interest (1942-44)
- (d) the cooperative movement (1942-44)
- (e) the production movement of 1943
- (f) the education movement of 1944.

A centralizing force which could unite, not only the population living in one base area, but that living in all the other base areas as well was necessary. With success in war, communist areas were expanding and new base areas were being created. It was necessary to incorporate the population of these areas under a centralized government. Thus, there was a necessity for broad policy directives. At the same time, it was urgent that these policies be interpreted correctly and carried out in a flexible manner. War and material conditions caused a differing situation from one area to the next. Cadres at township and village levels were the crucial links, since they were the people responsible for passing on Communist policies to the populations and for carrying out revolution under specific local conditions. Many cadres had become ineffective links, and it was necessary that they re-think the nature and responsibilities of their positions. Many were sent to school in Yanan, and numerous meetings were called to conduct criticism and self-criticism.

Truth and reason, Mao believed, would ultimately triumph, but when the acceptance of reason required the individual to relinquish deeply held attitudes, to remake in effect his vision of the world, a sharp stimulus was required. Such a shock had occurred among many who participated in violent land revolution or risked their lives in the military struggle against Japan in the course of which new ideals and revolutionary commitment were forged. The 1942 rectification movement, like the Cultural Revolution a quarter of a century later, simulated an environment of struggle in which fundamental values and perceptions could be re-examined and challenged by revolutionary ideals. This was particularly essential in Shen-Kan-Ning which remained remote from the sharp struggle being waged against Japan in rear-area bases (Selden, pp. 194-195).

Organization was deemed by Mao to be an extremely important component of successful revolution. However, it was not only the top echelons of Party, government and administration which had to be organized. The cadres at all levels also had to be

integrated into a coherent system and, under them, the local population. In order for such a system to work, especially in times of crisis and in view of the fact that this system was a new one, each individual had to make a serious commitment to the organization and, beyond it, to the revolution. The rectification movement, like the Cultural Revolution, created an atmosphere of crisis in which individuals were tested and their commitment to a socialist society was forged.

This view was rooted in a voluntarist and populist strain in Mao's thinking. These two elements colored his interpretation of Marxism. Individuals could be judged not only according to their class background, but according to their way of thought and action. Thus, education, as well as a class revolution, could 'remould' people, especially intellectuals and individuals tending towards an elitist viewpoint. This gave much more scope to what a revolution could accomplish, and also allowed for the concept of a 'permanent revolution'.¹³

A fundamental postulate of Mao Tse-tung's revolutionary world view was that men could transcend the limitations of class. In the process of making revolution, individuals of all classes could become revolutionaries. The united front policies of the Yen-an period provided a rigorous test for this view by incorporating large numbers of students and intellectuals in the party. Cheng-feng initiated the most ambitious effort attempted thus far to create an institutional context for individual education and transformation. As the pressures from attacking forces in the base areas increased tendencies to waver and capitulate, cheng-feng provided a means to strengthen commitment to the party and revolution. Moreover, the campaign sought to broaden the commitment of cadres beyond anti-Japanese fervor to the revolutionary transformation of

¹³ See Donald Munro, "The Malleability of Man in Chinese Marxism" in The China Quarterly, 48, October/December 1971, pp. 615-617.

Chinese society. This was essential if cadre unity was to be preserved as the party, in the years after 1942, set about initiating radical changes in rural life. The success of the cheng-feng movement is attested by the fact that, in shifting its course to the intensification of rural revolution, the party retained the support of large numbers of cadres from elite backgrounds who had initially rallied to affirm its anti-Japanese stance. (Selden, p. 196).¹⁴

Not only were many cadres being re-educated, they were being 'sent down' as well. The village and the township were to become the crucial units, and the magistrate the crucial figure. The autonomy of administrative departments was broken. They were coordinated with each other and made responsible to the magistrate at the village level. Because of the acquired importance of the villages and magistrates, many village cadres were sent to school and intellectuals and cadres at higher levels sent to take their place. Local cadres and leaders were often illiterate. Thus, it was decided to send at least one intellectual or student to aid each magistrate in his work (ibid., p. 213).

There was another aspect to this situation. Many intellectuals and students had come to Yen'an from all parts of China. Most were city-bred and descended from elite families. Because the border region was populated mainly by illiterate peasants, their skills were required in order to administer and govern the area and teach the peasantry. However, their inexperience in working in rural areas and their attitude of superiority towards the peasantry often made their work useless. In addition, they represented a potential danger. There was a chance that they could subvert the revolution.

¹⁴ 'Cheng feng' (translated into the English language as 'rectification') is short for 'cheng tun feng tso' - 'to change work style'.

In traditional China, the scholar gentry was a dominant class, respected by the peasantry and entitled to certain privileges. Although the role of this class as an intermediary between the peasantry and the ruling forces of China had all but disappeared at the turn of the century, the peasantry continued to respect the educated. The penetration of Western influences added another dimension to education. While the imperial examination system was abolished, education along Western lines continued the tradition of creating an intellectual elite. Education along these lines was still accessible only to the few and gave them an important role to play – that of 'modernizing' China along Western lines and thus allowing China to compete on an equal footing with the imperialist nations. Nationalism was an important component in this view and was a major reason why intellectuals and students left the coastal cities for Yenan. Many of them viewed the Communists as the most patriotic group and went to join them for this reason, rather than because of sympathy for communism. Once in Yenan, they were ready to fight the Japanese, but not the forces of illiteracy and ignorance – the task the Communists had in mind for them. Thus, re-educating these intellectuals became very important.

The Communists could not afford to have an elite establish itself in the border areas: the region was too poor to support such an elite, and there was a desperate need for skilled manpower in the countryside. At that time, there was no major city under Communist rule, where the intellectuals could entrench themselves. However, by 1941, they had already done much harm in splitting regions and populations. When sent to work, they tended to 'build on the best'.¹⁵ They set up schools in places where the

¹⁵ John Gurley, "Capitalist and Maoist Economic Development", in America's Asia: Dissenting Essays on Asian-American Relations, edited by Edward Friedman and Mark Selden, p. 331.

population was readily enthusiastic. This tended to be in large towns. Although there had been repeated directives to build schools in the countryside among the peasantry, there were few such schools in 1941. Where existent, they tended to be the most poorly equipped and staffed. The peasants, in many cases, refused to send their children to them, recognizing that they were of poor quality and not seeing the need of educating their children unless they had a chance of becoming part of the elite.¹⁶ A dichotomy had developed between an elite and the 'masses'. Implicit in this situation was the alienation of one side from the other. Rectification was aimed at re-educating the elite - both cadres and intellectuals. Party cadres were viewed as already being politically committed, although the great expansion of Communist Party members¹⁷ was bound to include the politically 'impure' - individuals who joined for personal advancement or to subvert the Party.¹⁸

Re-educating Party cadres was a matter of teaching them that their interests were not to be separated from those of the Party and government, on the one hand, and

¹⁶ Michael Lindsay has translated some of the directives affecting education in the border regions. They illustrate, in practical form, many of these problems, issuing ways in which to deal with them. See op. cit. for reference to his work. Chinese Education, A Journal of Translations, also presents translations of education directives, although it tends to concentrate on the Shensi-Kansu-Ningsia Border Region. See especially Volume iv, Numbers 3 and 4, for information on the Yenan period.

¹⁷ In 1937 Mao Tse-tung estimated that there were 40,000 Party members. Nym Wales gives a figure of 200,000 for 1938. By 1943, Chou En-lai was quoted as saying that there were 800,000 Party members. According to Mao, this figure had risen to 1,200,000 by 1945. See Boyd Compton, Mao's China: Party Reform Documents, 1942-44, University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1966, p. xxviii.

¹⁸ See, for example, Liu Shao-ch'i's article, "Training of the Communist Party Member," for the different motives Party members had in joining the Communist Party during these years. See ibid, pp. 108-155, for the text.

the peasantry on the other. The intellectuals in cadre ranks posed a more difficult problem in that many were not politically committed, although often more skilled. It was necessary to make them 'red' as well as 'expert'. This problem would recur time and again during the 1950's and 1960's, to the point that by the time of the Cultural Revolution, the slogan 'red and expert' was very popular (see Chapter Four for an elaboration on this theme). While peasants and village cadres were sent to school, many of these intellectuals were sent 'down' from the towns to the villages. They needed informal, rather than formal, schooling, and their teachers were to be the peasant 'masses'. The only way to break the elite/mass dichotomy was for the elite to become one with the 'masses' - the peasantry. The intellectuals had to be proletarianized.

The 'to-the-village' movement (or 'hsia-hsiang'), which began in 1941, had other aspects to it as well. Out of a need for non-productive labor in productive work, thus resulting in the sending of cadres to participate in farm work, grew the conception of the importance of strong bonds between leaders and the people and between outside leaders and local leaders. The importance of educating intellectuals and students informally, after a period of formal briefing and study, was part of the movement.

The aim was to overcome the mutual ignorance of intellectuals and peasants through sharing a common experience, to bridge the gap between town and back country, and to overcome barriers separating mental and manual labor. Intellectuals participating in physical labor under primitive village conditions would experience at first hand the hardship and problems but also the possibilities of peasant life. They also would bring new skills and ideas to villages cut off from the outside world. The 'to-the-village' movement was one facet of the response to the critical problems that all developing nations face: how to create an environment in which the most talented and skilled youths will be willing to commit their talents

and their lives to the development of backward rural areas? And, how to effectively utilize those talents outside of the advanced urban areas in which they were nurtured? (Selden, p. 226)

On the other side of the coin, the proletariat had to be intellectualized.

The peasant cadres received special attention during rectification. In cadre schools,¹⁹ they were not only given political and basic literacy training, but shown how to conduct investigations in their regions as well. It was not enough that they learn to implement orders from above under local conditions. It was also necessary that the government and Party in Yen-an know the conditions prevalent in various regions, so that suitable directives could be issued. The slogan 'from the masses, to the masses' summarized this approach. The cadres were to learn from the peasants their needs and the means necessary to satisfy them. They were to pass this information on to higher levels, where it would be decided how to deal with this situation, and orders and directives would then be issued downwards. The cadres at the village level were to take these directives, explain them to the people, and try to implement them. In the process of implementation, difficulties and a new situation would arise. After discussing these with the peasants, it was the duty of the cadres to again summarize the information and pass it up to higher levels. Thus, the process became self-generating and, if done properly, led to progress as old difficulties were overcome and new ones were defined and tackled.²⁰ This was 'mass line'

¹⁹ Seybolt goes into detail on various of these cadre schools, especially K'angta, and shows their influence on the rectification movement and the campaigns that were later launched on its back, in his Ph.D. thesis, "Yenan Education and the Chinese Revolution, 1937-1945", Harvard University, Massachusetts, 1969.

²⁰ For the theoretical and philosophical reasoning behind this concept, see Mao Tse-tung's two essays, "On Practice" and "On Contradiction" in Volume 1 of Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1967, pp. 295-309 and pp. 311-347.

in action.

It was important that cadres and intellectuals be integrated into a framework that linked government with the people and that they be made its crucial links, but this was not enough. Revolution and, more immediately, the outcome of the anti-Japanese war, depended on the active participation of the peasantry, which constituted the bulk of the population. The military situation was judged very important, and there was a concerted effort to make the PLA a model army.²¹ This was crucial in order to gain the

²¹ The following lines of the song "The Three Main Rules of Discipline and the Eight Points for Attention", taken from a pamphlet in China Pictorial (1972, 8), written and popularized in the Yenan period, show in which way the People's Liberation Army was to be a 'model army':

"Revolutionary army men must know,
Discipline's Three Rules, Eight Points for Attention:
First, obey orders in all of our actions,
March in step, to win victory;
Second, don't take a single needle or thread,
People will support and welcome us;
Thirdly, turn in ev'rything we capture,
Strive to lighten people's burdens.
Dis'pline's Three Rules we must carry thru,
Eight Points for Attention we must bear in mind:
First, we must be polite when we're speaking to the masses,
Respect the people, don't be arrogant;
Buy fair, sell fair, and be reas'nable;
Thirdly, don't forget to person'ly return,
Ev'ry single thing that we borrow;
Fourthly, if we damage anything,
Pay the full price, not a half cent less;
Fifth, don't hit people or swear at them,
Tot'ly overcome warlordism;
Sixth, take care, don't damage people's crops,
Either on march or in battle;
Seventh, do not take liberties with women,
Get rid of all habits decadent;
Eighth, don't ill-treat prisoners of war,
Don't hit, swear at or search them;
Ev'rybody must consciously observe the dis'pline,
Mutu'lly supervise, and not violate it.
Know rev'lution'ry dis'pline's ev'ry point,
People's fighters love the people e'er,
Defend the mother land and forever march ahead,
People o'er the land support and welcome us."

cooperation of the population, upon which guerrilla warfare was totally dependent. The PLA was not only to be a model that the people would respect, but also one they would seek to emulate. Thus, the production campaign, launched in 1943, began in the army. Many army units became economically self-sufficient, removing the burden of support from the peasantry while showing it that agricultural and industrial production could be improved. Model units were chosen and their achievements publicized. As the campaign for crack troops and simple administration was supplemented by the campaign to increase production, the choosing of labor heroes as models was initiated in the countryside (Selden, p. 211). This was one aspect of mass education, an informal but highly effective way of broadcasting new techniques and models (at this time, there was a campaign to promote cooperative methods of farming) to the peasantry, scattered throughout the border areas, and bringing it together, in order to raise agricultural production and achieve economic self-sufficiency. The aim was to get everybody in the entire region actively and productively involved. This promulgation of campaigns was the second facet (the rectification movement being the first) in approaching and solving the crisis that had arisen by 1941.

There was an extremely close link between this type of informal education, of learning by imitating and doing, and formal education as it came to be defined with the adoption of the 'mass line'. Schools were put in the hands of the people with the creation of min-pan schools – schools that were operated by the people with government financial support. Schools became part of the production drive. Teachers and students helped, not only by looking after their needs and thus reducing the peasantry's financial burden, but they helped the peasants in their work.²² School was held in the winter,

²² Lindsay provides many specific examples in his translations. See op. cit.

when there was little work to be done, and suspended during spring sowing and autumn harvesting, so that adults could receive education with minimal disruption in their daily lives. Schooling was to be in the service of the people, not a means of siphoning the most talented to the cities, depriving rural areas of their skills and creating rural/urban dichotomies. Talent was to be spread thin and made available to as many people as possible, rather than being concentrated and channelled for specific tasks. This approach has been labelled 'building on the worst' and is tied into the Maoist vision of man.²³

Western economic theory holds that development should proceed from a concentration and development of the best resources (whether human or material) to the point where the entire population benefits and the society as a whole 'develops'. Thus, education should be given to those best qualified and gradually extended until all receive its benefits. The problem with this process is that it has a 'trickle-down' effect: although everyone in a population might eventually benefit, there is great unevenness involved. People in the countryside do not receive as good an education as people in the cities; the working class does not receive as many material benefits as the entrepreneurial class; small firms do not make as much profit as do corporations; the Third World does not 'develop' as fast as does the West. Gaps between rich and poor within and between countries not only remain but they grow. It is becoming apparent that the 'development' of some is based on the continuing 'underdevelopment' of others. The industrialized West needs the resources of the Third World to continue its own process of growth. By taking these from the Third World, it deprives the latter from industrializing in its turn and 'catching up'.

²³ John G. Gurley, op. cit. pp. 338-9. The following argument is based on this article.

The Maoist vision of man approaches the whole concept of development from the other end. Rather than 'building on the best', it sees development as proceeding from a 'building on the worst'. Nobody rises or prospers unless all are able to do so (ibid, p. 332). Progress is not measured solely in economic terms. The social costs and benefits of development receive as much, if not more, attention.

Because every society has a historical legacy on which it is based, the visions and goals of its people are circumscribed by historical fact. In China, the fact of war and the means necessary to fight and win it led the Chinese Communists to develop the theory of the 'mass line'. Beyond the immediate wartime situation, however, there was another vision – that of creating a communist society. Mao Tse-tung, as leader of the movement, helped fashion that vision. Basic in his vision of communist man was the populist and voluntarist strain in his background and thinking.

It has already been stated that the original base area in the North, led by the partisans, was governed in accordance with principles very similar to those that Mao was developing in Kiangsi. The partisans themselves shared similar life experiences to Mao's. "Indeed, virtually the entire leadership nucleus of the partisan movement in northern Shensi was drawn from student activists attending middle school in the exhilarating atmosphere which followed the "May 4th Movement" (Selden, p. 20). "It was among elite youth exposed to diverse ideological currents in the area's middle schools that the tensions between two worlds and the insecurity bred by the bankruptcy of traditional values and institutions were sharply focused. These young men frequently assumed leadership of partisan movements" (ibid., p. 43). The foreign impact, when added to all the

social, political and economic ills of the society, was probably the deciding factor in preventing the partisans from following the road of traditional rebel heroes. That things foreign had such an impact is probably due to the education of these youths, where traditional ideas and ways of doing things came in conflict with Western modes of thought in a setting where nationalism was becoming a very important trend. This educational background, together with actual circumstances, was probably responsible for pushing these intellectuals to join the partisans, where they became chiefly responsible for directing the movement towards rural and social revolution. Mao Tse-tung fits into this pattern.

Before Mao left home, his family had acquired middle-peasant status (Schram, p. 19). He left home to further his education. When revolution broke out in his own province of Hunan in 1911, Mao joined the army. He was not engaged in any fighting and returned after six months to resume his studies, the 'revolution' having been aborted. While in the army, Mao showed that "he had so far absorbed the student mentality that he spent a significant part of his monthly wages of seven dollars in buying water from the water carriers. The soldiers were expected to bring it themselves from outside the city, but Mao considered it beneath his dignity as an intellectual to carry anything" (*ibid.*, p. 34).

It would be hard to overestimate the importance of these five years (1913-18) in Mao's life. They were, first of all, the years during which he acquired a great part of his education, both classical and modern, Chinese and Western. But they were more than that. They launched Mao on a brief career in teaching which served as a stepping-stone to a wider role. More important still, perhaps, the intellectually alert and politically conscious student body of the First Normal School, and of other boys' and girls' schools in Changsha, provided Mao with an ideal

training ground for his apprenticeship as a political worker. There he developed ideas and techniques which he was to apply later; there he acquired friends and comrades, some of whom were to follow his leadership until the final victory in 1949 (ibid., p. 36).

However, even as he was educating himself and becoming politically active, "Mao Tse-tung remained profoundly imbued with the peasant environment of his childhood" (ibid., p. 43). "Edgar Snow, the first foreign journalist to interview him, described Mao justly as characterized by a combination of intellectual depth and peasant shrewdness" (ibid., p. 209). From his student days on, Mao was very concerned with the preservation of the Chinese 'nation' against foreign aggression. This concern became part of his vision of social, political and cultural revolution among the Chinese peasantry, and the economic transformation of the rural way of life. Mao's three decades of political experience before final victory in 1949 had taught him "the importance of mass support, and the means for mobilizing it.

Having himself issued from the Chinese peasantry, he understood the needs and the intellectual world of the masses...Mao's leadership style, strongly marked by the conventions of popular literature, brought him closer to the peasantry, but might easily appear unsophisticated to the intellectuals and the bourgeoisie. Conversely, his aim of Westernizing and modernizing China (though in Marxist-Leninist terms) met with the approval of a large part of the urban population, but was vaguely disturbing to the peasants" (ibid., p. 253).

From this background came Mao's commitment to the popular will and his development of 'mass line' theories and concepts. Material conditions and his own experiences showed him that revolution and victory were impossible without the active co-operation and participation of every member of society. Apart from this populist strain, was a 'voluntarist' belief in the natural goodness of man and the capability of the human will to overcome all obstacles. "This intellectual tradition emphasizes that human will,

when properly organized, can overcome all obstacles and achieve all goals." It consists of an "infinite faith in the people."²⁴

(Mao's) faith in the ability of self-conscious men to mold objective social reality in accordance with their ideas and ideals...implied, among other things, that revolution in China need not be dependent on any pre-determined levels of social and economic development and that immediate opportunities for revolutionary action need not be restricted by orthodox Marxist-Leninist formulas. It also implied a special concern for developing and maintaining 'correct' ideological consciousness, the ultimately decisive factor in determining revolutionary success or failure. Correct thought, in the Maoist view, is the first and essential prerequisite for correct revolutionary action...The Cheng Feng Campaign of 1942-44 for the rectification of 'undesirable' ideas and ideological tendencies was the most intensive application of a general Chinese Communist policy.²⁵

To understand the reasons for the Chinese success in the Yen'an period, it is of special importance to take into account Mao's genuinely populist faith in the peasant masses as potential bearers of socialist revolutionary consciousness. For it is this faith that permitted - and indeed dictated - the much celebrated Maoist notion of 'the mass line', the various principles and rules by which Communist cadres became intimately involved and identified with the peasant masses. The Maoist maxim that intellectuals and party cadres must become the pupils of the masses before they can become their teachers was in fact widely practiced in the Yen'an days. Had it been otherwise, the Communists could never have acquired the mass support and cooperation among the peasantry that was so essential to the successful employment of the strategy of 'people's war' (*ibid.*, p. 286-7).

²⁴ See "Comments by Michel Oksenberg" in *China in Crisis*, edited by Ping-ti Ho and Tang Tsou, the University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1968, p. 489 in Volume One, Book Two.

²⁵ Maurice Meisner, "Yenan Communism and the Rise of the Chinese People's Republic" in *Modern East Asia*, edited by James B. Crowley, Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., U.S.A., 1970, pp. 283-284.

If the preceding is in fact the case, then the primacy and complexity of the 'problem of the intellectuals' as it arose with the beginnings of the revolutionary movements, and as it has cropped up again and again since then (through the Yen-an period, through Liberation, through the Cultural Revolution and beyond) becomes clear. A large number of revolutionary leaders, including Mao Tse-tung and Liu Chih-tan, had a background of intellectual activity as an element in their formation as revolutionaries. Once revolutionaries, however, their main concern gradually became the peasantry.

As this thesis proceeds through an examination of education, especially mass education, a fundamental contradiction should come to light - that between the intellectuals and the peasantry. This contradiction is present in the person of Mao.

I began life as a student and at school acquired the ways of a student; I then used to feel it undignified to do even a little manual labour, such as carrying my own luggage in the presence of my fellow students, who were incapable of carrying anything, either on their shoulders or in their hands. At that time I felt that intellectuals were the only clean people in the world, while in comparison workers and peasants were dirty. I did not mind wearing the clothes of other intellectuals, believing them clean, but I would not put on clothes belonging to a worker or peasant, believing them dirty. But after I became a revolutionary and lived with workers and peasants and with soldiers of the revolutionary army, I gradually came to know them well, and they gradually came to know me well too. It was then, and only then, that I fundamentally changed the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois feelings implanted in me in the bourgeois schools. I came to feel that compared with the workers and peasants the unremoulded intellectuals were not clean and that, in the last analysis, the workers and peasants were the cleanest people and, even though their hands

were soiled and their feet smeared with cow-dung,
they were really cleaner than the bourgeois and
petty-bourgeois intellectuals.²⁶

In coming to view the peasantry as the motive force in rural revolution, Mao did not discard the role of the intellectual, as becomes evident in the preceding quote. He sought to accommodate the two, providing the intellectual was willing to integrate himself in the peasant's way of life. Even within himself, Mao did not reject one self in favour of the other once he became a revolutionary. Both types, the peasant and the intellectual, had crucial qualities necessary to form the ideal - the 'communist man'. The peasant was close to the earth - he lived with it, on it and through changing it insured his own survival. But he had basic faults as well. He was uneducated, narrow in outlook and, because of long years of oppression, had become highly individualistic and willing to fight only for immediate interests, abandoning the struggle once these were satisfied.²⁷ Here the intellectual possessed the qualities the peasant lacked. He was idealistic - he saw his life and immediate situation as fitting into a larger pattern that could be changed to a certain extent; and he had acquired certain skills (intellectual and physical) that enabled him to better his own situation. But he lacked the qualities of the peasant. He was divorced from material production and tended to consider himself above or better than those who worked with their hands.

The educational experiment during the Yen-an years was an attempt to draw the two types together. Education was of utmost importance, not only because it could give

²⁶ Mao Tse-tung, op. cit., Volume III, p. 73. The emphasis is mine.

²⁷ William Hinton in Fanshen, and Eric Wolf in Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century (Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, 1969, pp. 103-155), document these negative qualities of the peasantry. Hinton describes in vivid terms the means sought to overcome them in Long Bow Village.

the peasants and their representatives, the cadres, certain intellectual tools and training, but because it could be a means to break the barrier that the intellectuals had set up between themselves and the 'masses'. While the peasants were to learn from the cadres and intellectuals, the intellectuals were to learn from the people. Conditions, however, were far from ideal for the pursuit of this two-way transformation. The peasants lacked even such basic tools as literacy. Material conditions made it extremely hard for basic physical survival, never mind personal transformation. Yet the latter was seen as crucial for the improvement of material conditions. Agriculture had to be changed from a system based on an individualistic peasant economy to a cooperative form of farming in order that larger yields be obtained. This involved learning techniques, and learning to cooperate and work with others. Education, in other words, was not a privilege that could be pursued once everyone had enough to eat and leisure time to spare. It was a crucial input, needed to improve material conditions and raise living standards. As it was the whole population, and not only a chosen few, who were to become better off, everyone had to participate in the educational process. Because not everyone shared the same life experience, education took on a different meaning for the various segments of the population. It was the task of the CCP to coordinate this process and see that it was functional.

Historical conditions, however, again intervened. The Japanese were defeated and civil war followed. Liberation was finally achieved in 1949. The main task of the Communists now was to unify the country and learn how to govern and administer it. The education experiment, in the meantime, had passed into the background. Other needs were judged primary and education made to serve them. The last chapter will examine this situation and trace the course education followed during the 1950's and 1960's. It was not

that the experiment was rejected. From time to time, attempts were made to implement it, and these attempts will be described. However, the experiment was part of a larger vision, that of the 'mass line', and the 'mass line' in the fifties was not so much abandoned as put to one side as stress was placed on industrialization and the building of a socialist economy.

The following chapter will examine in more detail the nature of education in the Yen'an era. The last chapter will then trace educational developments through the 1950's and 1960's, up to the time of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

CHAPTER THREE

Education in the Liberated Areas

In the previous chapter, an attempt was made to show why such principles as the 'mass line', 'democratic centralism', and 'from the people, to the people', were developed and judged crucial for revolutionary success. This chapter will attempt to show how these principles were translated into educational policy and what this meant for education in the liberated zones during the Yenan era.

By the end of 1938, the Chinese Communists held the following areas: the Shen-Kan-Ning Border Region, the capitol of which (Pao-an) was moved to Yenan after the Sian incident; Northwest Shansi, Shansi-Chahar-Hopei, which had two base areas; Southeast Shansi where the Communist army was headquartered; Shantung, whose administration was still in the hands of the KMT; and various parts between Shanghai and Nanking, where the New Fourth Army was fighting (Lindsay, p. 9).

Until the autumn of 1938, the Japanese were satisfied with capturing and holding railway lines, making little effort to penetrate into territory away from them. This gave the Communists time to build up and organize guerrilla zones behind Japanese lines of operation. However, by late autumn in 1938 until 1942, Japanese offensives grew and became directed against local peasant populations. They started to employ a system of closely-spaced forts connected by ditches, which made penetration of Japanese lines much more difficult (ibid., p. 12).

By the end of 1943, Communist areas had expanded to include Shansi-Suiyan, Shansi-Hopei-Honan-Shantung, a Communist-led Shantung provincial government, North Kiangsu and the Kiangsu-Anhui-Chekiang Border, an area between Hongkong and Canton, and Hainan Island (ibid., p. 11).

Liberated areas were of two types which often shaded off into each other; stable base areas and guerrilla areas. "Each main Communist Region had one or more stable base areas which were free from the enemy for most of the year and usually got at least several days' warning of enemy attack. Here it was possible to have regular openly functioning administration. In educational work it was possible to have a regular school system, to hold conferences, training courses, etc." In the guerrilla areas, "(e)ducational work had to be arranged with the schools so they could be dispersed at very short notice in case of enemy attack or else operate under some sort of cover, such as registering as a school in the enemy educational system but teaching from Communist area text books when the enemy was not there" (ibid., p. 12).

The Communist areas could vary in terms of two different variables, the area they covered and the division of this area between stable base and guerrilla area. Between 1940 and 1943 the total area was expanding but the population under Communist control was falling because the Japanese were reducing more and more of the stable base areas to guerrilla areas. Between 1943 and 1945 the boundaries of the Communist areas did not expand very greatly but there was a rapid rise in population under Communist control because the Japanese fort-and-blockade-line system was being pushed back towards the railways and main cities (ibid., p. 13).

Thus, the liberated areas were separated from one another by strips of enemy-occupied territory. This required that each Region be able to govern and administer its

area in a fairly autonomous manner. In these years, there was, in fact, no formal central government. Rather, the Central Committee of the CCP would issue general policy directives to the different Regions, which would then use them as a basis for drawing up laws and regulations. This was to be done in the light of local circumstances and conditions.

Within each Region, there was a system of bureaucratic divisions. There was a formal political organization in Shansi-Hopei-Honan-Shantung, Shantung, the North-east (Manchuria), Shansi-Chahar-Hopei, Shansi-Suiyuan, Shensi-Kansu-Ningsia, and Central China. Each of these Regions was divided into sub-Regions. Each sub-Region was then divided into chuan chu (which approximated the chou of the old imperial structure and the supervisory districts of the KMT system). The chuan chu were divided into hsien (or counties) which were themselves divided into chu. The last links in the chain were the village, or hsiang, governments (*ibid.*, p. 15).

Within each Region, bureaucracy had a tendency to develop and flourish until a peak was reached by the end of 1941.

The basic governmental organs in which bureaucratic practice flourished were the secretariat, and the departments of civil affairs, finance, education, and reconstruction. Each maintained branch...or vertical organizations linking the region, subregion, and district offices. Lower echelons were directly responsible to their superiors within these departments. Bureaucratic appointments were made at the regional level by the civil affairs department in conjunction with personnel officials in the individual departments. The result was a centralized and autonomous bureaucratic system penetrating to the district level. It was relatively immune from control by the party or elected government officials such as the district magistrate.¹

¹ Mark Selden, The Yen-an Way in Revolutionary China, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

This meant that prior to 1942 these departments had a near monopoly on experienced cadres, who performed specialized tasks for them. Allegiance was directed towards one's superior in the department, versus the Party, the people at the village level, or, for that matter, the revolution. This system of vertical rule "established a clear-cut chain of responsibility and command within each department and concentrated power in Yen-an" (*ibid.*, p. 217).

This centralization of authority at the regional level made it extremely difficult to coordinate the work of departments at the district and lower levels or to respond creatively to local variations and emergencies. The price of uniform and stable administration was a tendency toward bureaucratic rigidity which was the very antithesis of the egalitarian and participatory thrust of mobilization politics. The tasks of government were to be left to the experts... One significant corollary of this system was the concentration of state resources such as schools and industry in bureaucratic centers, the regional and district capitals where administrative efficiency and controls were maximized. As a result, most townships and villages remained without and remote from schools and publicly financed industry which generated new ideas and socio-economic change in the border area (*ibid.*, pp. 217-8).

The wartime and financial situation that had developed by 1941 required that the CCP be more in touch with, and responsive to, the peasantry. This situation caused a number of campaigns to be initiated. One of the primary aims was to break bureaucratic rigidity in order that government be more responsive to local needs and more able to draw up and implement policies that were relevant in local situations. Vertical rule was to be replaced by dual rule in the campaign for crack troops and simple administration.

Increasingly, important decisions were made on the spot in bureaucratic sections and interdepartmental meetings at the county level. Bureaucratic sections thus won greater autonomy vis-a-vis departmental supervisors but were subject to more integration and control by the

county magistrate and coordinating committees... (T)he official working in a county section of the bureaucracy... was required to modify and adapt policy... The cadre with a broad grasp of local conditions and the ability to coordinate and unify diverse policies was at a premium. These qualities were critically important for the effective functioning of the magistrate.²

"Dual rule shifted the locus of power from regional offices which framed broad policy lines to lower levels which implemented them."³ This enabled greater flexibility in relation to local demands and needs.

As long as bureaucratic efficiency was stressed, the focus as far as cadres were concerned was on the trained expert. With the changes initiated after 1941, the focus changed. Local cadres were now given priority and importance. These cadres differed greatly from the 'experts'. In many cases, they were simply the most active and highly committed peasants in their villages. They were more a part of the peasantry than of an intellectual elite. At the same time, they had more of a potential in leading the peasantry and expressing what it was the peasantry wanted and needed than those cadres with formal training stationed in regional capitals. However, because they were peasants, they lacked certain requirements crucial for governing and administering. One of these requirements was basic literacy. Education, in the years after 1941, focused on giving these cadres such basic tools as literacy, accounting, knowledge about sanitation and hygiene, and rudimentary political training. This 'new line' in education was aimed beyond local

² Mark Selden, "The Yen'an Legacy: The Mass Line", op. cit., pp. 119-20.

³ Mark Selden, *The Yen'an Way in Revolutionary China*, op. cit., p. 221.

cadres at the general peasant population. However, due to shortages in teachers and materials, and because of wartime necessities, local cadres were given priority. This priority in itself was aimed at the peasantry insofar as, once local cadres received some education, they were expected to 'teach' the peasants in their villages their new skills.

No social aggregation could advance as a block, Its individual members possessed varying degrees of awareness and varying capacities for learning and growth. In real life one had to depend on the more advanced to lead the less advanced and on the less advanced to lead the backward...The backward soon reached the level of their teachers, and so understanding spiralled until the whole concept of what was advanced and what was backward had to be revised. When such a process was consciously and systematically unfolded year after year, decade after decade, in a countryside containing millions of people, the total effect was astonishing. The whole people became politicized, became conscious, became active, and finally did indeed become capable of transforming their world, and, in that process, of still further transforming themselves (Hinton, p. 610).

Before such a process could be set in motion, a conception of what constituted 'advanced' had to be formulated. This was done by Mao in his amalgamation of voluntarist and populist concepts with the Marxist notion of 'communist man'. The development of this idea took several years. In the meantime, the Western concept of 'advanced' had been adopted and proved unfeasible in a peasant environment geared to war. Bureaucracy was necessary in order to establish and rule geographical areas subject to military assault. However, there was a point at which bureaucracy began to have more negative than positive repercussions. This point was reached in 1941. From that year through the following ones, a new decentralized system was put into operation. The basis of this system was the principle of 'mass line'. Such a system required a different type of cadre than had been receiving attention and training previously.

Two types of cadres, distinct elites, began to form within the government at this time. The bureaucracy, centered at the regional level in Yen-an, maintained regular channels to the district as in Ch'ing and Nationalist China. It was staffed by education officials capable of handling the heavy flow of paper work and reports. On the other hand, popularly elected governments and local officials, including party and military cadres at the district level and below, were overwhelmingly comprised of local activists who rose in the course of the land revolution or in subsequent mobilization campaigns. A 1943 government resolution analyzed the composition of the bureaucracy as follows: 'Ninety per cent of the subdistrict and township cadres are products of the revolutionary peasant struggle and are positive elements closely linked to the masses. But generally they are deficient in cultural and intellectual development, thus limiting their ability for independent work. Moreover, their progress is greatly limited by concepts of village and family.

'District-level cadres likewise are of worker and peasant background (especially peasant) in a majority of cases. Forty per cent received primary and middle school education, eighty per cent had extensive experience in the revolutionary struggle through which they became cadres of the border region government; but their theoretical level is low and culture insufficient. They cannot avoid being narrow-minded, and are often unable to cope with the new and complex circumstances.

'At the regional level more than seventy per cent of the cadres have participated since the war in the program for youthful intellectuals. They have spirit and the desire to learn but are deficient in actual learning, work, and practical experience' (Selden, pp. 146-7).

A cadre training and rectification (cheng-feng) campaign was launched in the spring of 1942. It was here that a specific "rectification methodology of intensive education, small-group study, criticism and self-criticism, and thought reform...was developed and implemented on a sweeping scale" (ibid., p. 191). Cheng-feng was based on a study

movement begun in Yen-an in 1939, involving 4000 cadres and students. 'Rectification methodology' was developed and applied at K'angta, ('Resist Japan University'), the leading cadre-training institute, based in Yen-an. "Intense criticism and self-criticism was an extraordinarily effective method for breaking down traditional leadership conceptions, for overcoming differences in values between outside and local, educated and uneducated cadres" (*ibid.*, p. 198).

Cheng-feng was directed toward building a unified Party with common ideas, ideology, and goals... Toward this end the Party launched a cadre education campaign of unprecedented proportions. In the 1942 cheng-feng movement, Marxism-Leninism and examples of its application in China provided the tools, and a basic rectification methodology - consisting of intensive education, small group study, criticism and self-criticism, and thought reform - was developed toward a full analysis of the past and present problems confronting the Party and its individual cadres.⁴

Whereas cheng feng was concerned mainly with cadres, other campaigns, wider in scope, developed alongside or in conjunction with rectification.

The campaign for crack troops and simple administration was launched from 1941 to 1943. In order to reduce costs, the focus of government work was shifted downwards to the district and village administrations. This was also an attempt to curb the power of the bureaucracy. Cadres from higher bureaucratic levels were sent 'down' to the districts and villages as part of the 'to-the-village' campaign (hsia-hsiang, later more widely known as hsia-fang) of 1941 and 1942 (*ibid.*, p. 110). This campaign served to provide isolated villages with new leaders, many of whom had a grasp of Marxist-Leninist principles

⁴ Mark Selden, "The Yen-an Legacy: The Mass Line," *op. cit.*, p. 104.

and came from Yen'an aware of Party policy. These cadres, in turn, began to take part in production, often for the first time in their lives. However, "(t)he pragmatic and short-run goals of using 'non-productive labor' to overcome temporary labor shortages gave way to a new conception of the relationship between leaders and the people that grew out of the interaction of outside cadres and intellectuals with peasants and local cadres."⁵

Students and intellectuals studied in Yen'an, preparatory to being sent down to the villages. The sequence was significant, for it was believed that without prior assimilation of new goals and attitudes toward the people, intellectuals were likely to remain alienated from the peasant masses, regardless of extensive contact with village life...In the majority of cases, intellectuals sent to the village served as teachers or as cadres assisting in the tasks of the local Party and government organizations. The campaign was designed to overcome the mutual ignorance and prejudice of intellectuals and peasants through sharing and observing a common experience and to overcome psychological barriers separating mental and manual labor.⁶

In addition, from 1942 until 1944, there was a campaign to reduce rent and interest, and a cooperative movement.

The production movement of 1943 introduced labor hero campaigns as a means of stimulating and encouraging the peasant economy.

In contrast to modernizing elites throughout the Third World, the party, in its 1943 production war, drew its primary inspiration and models not from the industrialized West but from the most creative elements of the Chinese peasantry. Although outsiders might initiate and encourage change, ultimate transformation required

⁵ Mark Selden, The Yen'an Way in Revolutionary China, op. cit., p. 226.

⁶ Mark Selden, "The Yen'an Legacy: The Mass Line," op. cit., pp. 122-3.

leadership that was rooted in the community and committed to building a new economy and a new society.⁷

Finally, there was the education movement, launched in 1944.

The critique of education developed during the cheng-feng movement paralleled criticisms of bureaucratic administration. By 1942, the education system, despite five years of rapid development, had barely scratched the surface of the overwhelming illiteracy of the border region. The party had actively encouraged peasant attendance in the expanding school system. But education remained elite education in that it was centered in district capitals, catered largely to families who could afford to send children there for study, and left most villages without schools or convenient access to them (ibid., p. 269).

Out of a school-age population of 165,000, in 1937 there were only 5600 primary-school students. This number had only risen to 22,000 by late 1939 and 29,500 by early 1944 (ibid., p. 269). There were many reasons for these low figures. The curriculum, despite some changes, remained irrelevant to peasant needs or desires. Students tended to acquire disdain for physical labor, even if they were only in the elementary schools. Their parents tended to view education as a means up and out of village life, and many of the teachers held similar views.

From 1943, as attention focused on production and other village problems, the results of the educational system posed dilemmas of the first magnitude. If education was to reinforce Yenan-style economic development and community reform, it had to be physically and intellectually integrated with rural life, that is, located within the villages and responsive to local problems... These issues of mass versus elite education, of community versus professional control of the schools, and of the political and technical context of education in a

⁷ Mark Senden, The Yenan Way in Revolutionary China, op. cit., p. 263.

changing society lay at the heart of the educational debate of 1944 (ibid., p. 270).

The new popular education movement stressed the acquisition of literacy and practical economic skills. The 1941 slogan, 'develop production, expand the schools', was based on this concept. As the network of schools was expanded to reach village levels, teachers were often recruited who had little or no formal qualifications or experience. Part-time schools, such as night schools, half-day schools, winter schools and literacy groups, were opened for workers and peasants. The operational principle for these schools was 'management by the people with the assistance of government' (the min-pan concept). While over-all policy and general problems remained in the hands of the government, most of the responsibility for developing and running particular schools rested with the villagers. Labor heroes or local cadres often became principals or teachers. Although often illiterate, they communicated new ideas about education and production. Cadres and students were sent to the villages to help them eliminate illiteracy, train local leaders, and create "a foundation for the economic and social changes already revolutionizing rural life" (ibid., p. 271). These teachers frequently rotated among several villages, placing 'little teachers' (usually a prominent student) in their stead.

"Just as the party had attempted to bridge the gap between a cadre elite and the people in the cheng-feng and 'to-the-village' movements, in the popular education movement it sought to redefine the role of teacher. The all-knowing, unquestioning authority figure was to yield to an instructor whose success rested on his responsiveness to genuine popular needs; frequently he was a peer of his students and indeed often a student himself" (ibid., p. 271).

Students lived at home and both they and their teachers were expected to work regularly in production. Learning was linked to doing, even in schools in the towns, and responsibility for and in education was divided among the students, teachers and the community. "The curriculum outlined for the new middle schools, for instance, was 'to begin with the concept of how to serve the people of the border region (principles of reconstruction) and end with the skills to serve (production and medical knowledge).'

"Education emphasized practical knowledge, analysis of contemporary and historical conditions, and above all service" (ibid., p. 272).

In 1944 education in the border region assumed many of the characteristics of other mass movements of that period: transfer of authority from professional educators at the district and higher levels to cadres and labor heroes working and living in the villages; decentralization; stress on mass rather than elite education; integration of education with the social and economic life of the village. The Party did not entirely abandon regular forms or deliberately sacrifice quality, though educational resources were strained to the limit, priorities were reordered, and the teaching in some of the most advanced centers was diluted. The 1944 educational goals were sweeping in scope; every man, woman and child was involved in forms of education ranging from formal schooling to spare-time study or reading groups among the members of mutual-aid teams, everywhere linked to concrete problems of production and social revolution. Just as the ambitious aims of the production movement had heightened the awareness of a labor shortage, in 1944 the number of teachers was found insufficient for the task. And again the solution rested on dual development, combining advanced and rudimentary techniques. Teachers were drawn not only from the educated elite, including former teachers and students, but also from among natural village leaders, many of them labor heroes or mutual-aid team leaders who could scarcely sign their names. If much of the new teaching was primitive and irregular, and if some of the new experiments undoubtedly proved short-lived, the first glimmerings of education were brought to hundreds of isolated

villages at a time when new skills and ideas could be effectively utilized in carrying forward the modernization process.⁸

The directives issued during these years emphasized the two-way relationship between 'democratic education' and 'democratic politics.'! Either was impossible to achieve without the other. One of these uses the following quote from Lenin: "Only he who at every step of the way uses his research, training, and education to join with the proletariat and laboring masses to carry out continual struggle against the old exploitative society can learn communism."⁹

New Democratic education is a product of New Democratic politics, it is one aspect of New Democratic politics. That is to say, without the foundation and guarantee of the anti-Japanese democratic political power under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, New Democratic education is impossible. In a society or nation where the reactionary classes maintain their political power, education cannot belong to the broad masses. Under feudal political rule, education is a privilege of the aristocracy; under the political rule of old-style democracy, education belongs to the bourgeoisie; in unoccupied China under the rule of Chinese fascism, education is inevitably drawn into the secret-police system; under the rule of the enemy and collaborationists, education can be slave education. Education is subject to a definite control and limitation by politics and serves a definite class... Anyone who thinks that the educational reconstruction of the past years has been due solely to the efforts of the comrades engaged in educational work, who thinks that education belongs to a system completely different from politics, is completely wrong.

On the other side, the development of New Democratic education can also push forward and assist all other forms of New Democratic reconstruction... Educational work can liberate them /workers, peasants and laborers/ from feudal

⁸ Mark Selden, "The Yen'an Legacy: The Mass Line," op. cit., p. 148.

⁹ This quote is taken from "Smash The Old Forms", 1941, found in Chinese Education, op. cit., p. 188.

superstition and from the prison of 'stupidity and ignorance'. To raise their political consciousness and cultural level, to improve their thought and ideas, to raise their enthusiasm and inventiveness, to lead and help them to carry on every kind of practical struggle, to unite every kind of activity - this is to fulfill every kind of political task and to strive for a force which can guarantee victory. To despise or underrate this kind of difficult educational work is incorrect.¹⁰

On a more concrete plane, education was to be tied in very closely to production. Not only was learning to be geared to skills useful and necessary to production needs, it was not to take people and time away from productive activities. On the other side, production was to be geared to the learning of new techniques. This was part of an effort not only to break narrow traditional practices in favor of more efficient means of production, it was also geared to show peasants that their village and their lives formed a small part of a larger whole which they could influence and shape. This was the task of education. Model productive units and villages showed the peasants that in their spare time they should form study groups in order to learn about these things.

(O)ur elementary schools and middle schools...can train only four types of people. One type is the person who returns home to work after graduation...(A)t present, education trains people to advance to a higher educational level. Therefore, if one returns home, it is not worth the trouble to have graduated from elementary school, and worth even less to have graduated from middle school. When he returns home he is dissatisfied and cannot be a model worker. It is even worse than not having gone to school.

Another type are 'public persons' who do various kinds of work for Party, government, army, and popular organizations. But education at present is not for this purpose; study is divorced from application. Furthermore, this need has its limits. If there are more than a certain number of public persons it reduces the necessary

¹⁰ This excerpt is taken from a speech delivered by Education Minister Liu in 1944, and can be found in Lindsay, op. cit., pp. 121-2.

labor force and increases the unnecessary financial burden.

The third type are those who advance to the next educational level; but very few advance from elementary school to middle school. Even if all advanced and graduated from middle school, where would they advance from there? It is unnecessary and impossible for the base areas to run old-style universities; and the high-level cadre schools today have no connection with middle schools.

!!!. The only other way is to become vagrants and loafers. This is not a joke but a fact.¹¹

These policy directives stressed over and over again that China was a technologically backward country, and thus did not need a highly developed educational system. An educational system should serve and reflect social and economic development. Since China was at a rudimentary level, education should likewise be simple, imparting rudimentary knowledge and skills. Education alone could not produce industrialization.¹² It had to be part of the social, cultural, political and economic systems, influencing them and, in turn, being influenced by their stage of development.

Cadre education was to receive priority over mass education. In-service cadres were to receive priority over the training of new ones. Active cadres were to be admitted at all educational levels, regardless of their educational qualifications, in order that students and teachers have contact with people who had practical experience in what was being taught. In mass education, adult education was to take precedence over the education of children (*ibid.*, p. 198). Production and wartime needs were immediate. Thus, education had to concentrate on imparting skills to those in a position capable of

¹¹ This quote is taken from a policy statement issued in 1944 and entitled "The Problem of Transforming General Education in the Base Areas." It is reprinted in *Chinese Education*, *op. cit.*, pp. 191-2.

¹² See, for example, "On Regulations and Curriculum in General Education," 1944, in *ibid.*, p. 197.

utilizing them as well as, and in the shortest time, possible. This is why in-service cadres and adults were given preference.

There was to be a three-level system of education. Mass education was to serve adults and children in the villages, towns and cities. Primary-level cadre education was for the improvement and cultivation of district personnel and sub-district and township cadres at district or subregional schools. Middle-level cadre education was for the benefit of border region personnel and district and subdistrict cadres, and cadres working in agriculture, industry, commerce, medicine, art and culture, and was to be conducted in military or border-region level schools (*ibid.*, p. 200).

(I)f our schools are capable of nothing more than taking a group of six-year-olds and shutting them up in the same class until they are twenty or so, cutting them off from any close contact with the various people around them because of their 'unequal degree of learning' (there are two sides to this so-called 'unequal degree of learning': although children in school may have a higher degree of general cultural knowledge than the people, their knowledge of the war and of production is considerably lower) - if this is what we call being educated, then it would be more to the point to say they are being wasted than to say they are being educated; to be 'educated' in such a way is to become a waste product of the times (*ibid.*, p. 201).

In mass education, three separate programs were established in 1937; elementary, secondary and social education. After an initial large-scale growth of schools with little in the way of quality, standardization of education was enforced. In cadre education, this proved excellent and led to the cheng-feng movement. In mass education, however, it proved disastrous.¹³ Training cadres for positions of high responsibility required a fairly tight and standard method of education. In order to reach every peasant,

¹³ Seybolt, "Yenan Education and the Chinese Revolution, 1937-1945", *op. cit.* pp. 213-215.

however, innovation and flexibility were the best educational methods possible. The educational methodology developed at K'angta (for example, criticism and self-criticism sessions, individual and small-group study) was to prove extremely effective and was to be employed on a wide scale in cheng-feng (as Seybolt shows in his thesis).

This methodology had application and relevance in mass education as well, in the form of teaching methods. However, this did not mean that cadre education was to be generalized for the peasantry as a whole. This was the error made during the 'standardization' period. Part of the error was due to the type of people staffing education departments: intellectuals raised in cities, with more experience in types of education suited to the training of cadres. Part of the error was also due to the thinking that went into the formation of educational policies. Education could be 'forced' on people willing and dedicated to a cause, because they could appreciate its necessity. Education could not be 'forced' on people who had no idea of what it was all about. Even in cadre education, it was seen that much of the curriculum was too rigid and too much. Even with cadres, it was better to 'persuade' than to 'force'.

After 1944, the training of 'professional' cadres was abandoned in favour of educating activist peasant cadres. The type of education developed here was 'mass' in nature since the people involved, although called 'cadres', were themselves part of the masses. It was in this phase that 'cadre' and 'mass' education came closer together and had a potential for blending into each other. It is interesting that it was in these years that the thinking behind the concept of 'intellectualizing the proletariat' while 'proletarianizing the intellectuals' was developed.

It was only after 1944 that education was given more of a priority. Previously, teachers were not even considered cadres, and were often expected to subsist on very little. They had to contend not only with low status in the bureaucracy, but with the animosity of the villagers, who often considered them outsiders and treated them as such. Not many people wanted to become teachers. Many were forcibly 'drafted' into the profession (Seybolt, p. 254). Moreover, those who enjoyed and were good at their work were often given other jobs as well (such as helping the magistrate do his accounting chores) or were taken out of teaching and placed in other types of work (Lindsay, p. 36).

With cheng-feng, most cadres had to enter school or engage in criticism and self-criticism sessions in order to review their work and attitude towards the people. It was at this time that the CCP sought to improve the treatment given teachers, as well as attempting to raise the quality of teaching. Teachers were now designated cadres. Many directives were issued, exhorting both cadres and the peasantry to respect and treat teachers well. June 6th was declared 'Teachers' Day' not only as a means to raise the status of teachers, but to pick model teachers and have teachers in general get together to study and criticize their work and methods of teaching.¹⁴

In an effort to raise the number of teachers and improve the quality of teaching, especially in view of the efforts being made to engage the peasantry in education, intellectuals and trained cadres were 'sent down' to the villages as part of the 'to-the-village' movement, often in order to take on teaching roles, and village-level cadres were encouraged to help in teaching. This not only expanded the teaching staff, it

¹⁴ See, for example, the section entitled "Methods of Celebrating June 6th, Teachers' Day" in Lindsay, op. cit., pp. 93-95.

also helped undermine the elitist view many teachers and the peasant population tended to have of teachers. Illiterate peasant cadres were to help village teachers by sharing their knowledge of practical production skills.

Cadres whose career in the party had been passed entirely in headquarters organizations, in the most stable base areas or in underground work in enemy areas, were very often similar to the typical cadres of other Communist parties...Cadres whose careers in the party had been mainly in the front-line areas and especially in the guerrilla areas were a noticeable contrast to this...Someone who refused to consider the real individual Chinese peasant as he actually was, who refused to take account of differences with the ideal Chinese peasant as he should have been according to Communist theory, was unlikely to survive. Work in the guerrilla areas was, therefore, a very effective education in modifying Communist theory to fit the facts, with a high probability of sudden death for those who failed to benefit from this education (*ibid.*, p. 25).

Due to such factors as the low literacy rate in the liberated areas, there were few secondary schools in the Yen'an period (only seven ever existed at the same time). Most of these were geared to training teachers, although two were geared to 'raising a new generation of revolutionary intellectuals' (Seybolt, p. 277). The students and teachers in all secondary schools were made to pass through the rectification process, after which the schools became ends in themselves. That is, they no longer prepared students to go on to university. Rather, they were to train teachers or give cadres training in specific vocations. Thus, a directive issued for Manchuria in 1946 called for giving teachers training first priority, vocational education second, followed by ordinary education.¹⁵ Middle schools were given increased importance over primary schools because of the need for middle and lower-level cadres in economic work, and for teachers

¹⁵ See "From Tung Pei Jih Pao (Harbin)" in Lindsay, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-67.

due to the increased emphasis on education. "In order to secure the closest connection between education and practice, it is best that vocational schools should be managed by the local productive organizations. The railway administration should run a railway school" (this is but one example in ibid., p. 64).

In primary education, "the old time methods must be destroyed and replaced by morning school, noon school, night school, half-day courses, one-day courses, etc., etc., of all kinds and forms. This is of advantage to the broad mass of the children from poor families" (ibid., p. 65).

The universities were not abolished, but their curriculum and teaching methodology changed drastically. Marion Menzies and William Paget visited two universities that later became North China University (in 1948).¹⁶ At that time, as a result of the promulgation of the 'Basic Program' or agrarian reform, special courses were being set up to study agrarian reform. Universities were to be tied in much more tightly to the peasant economy and way of life. As a matter of fact, three colleges of Lien Ta were closed for several months in order that the students and staff carry out land reform in neighboring hsien (ibid., p. 150).

Within the university, students were given a large say in the working of the institution through such means as the Student Association, which was "responsible for the preparation, study, manual work and group life of the whole student body" (ibid., p. 153).

Food, clothing and living accommodations were provided by the university on terms that were to be close to those of the local peasant population. Two hours were set

¹⁶ See Lindsay, op. cit., pp. 147-170.

aside every day for productive labor. Teachers were to live with and among their students, sharing in productive labor and helping them with their studies. "(T)he students examine and grade the teachers weekly and monthly on the basis of their teaching methods, spirit, honesty, outside work, and - as many students from the outside have considerable special knowledge - on course content" (*ibid.*, p. 157). Many students, and teachers, had 'special' knowledge because they were peasants and workers with experience in various technical fields, although with little in formal education. This enabled a greater exchange and sharing of knowledge between students and teachers with formal knowledge and those with practical experience.

Many of the students at Pei Ta, and almost all at Lien Ta, come from wealthy families and they naturally bring with them the attitudes and ideas of the old society, the old concept of learning, and an almost total ignorance of the peasants and their way of life. To correct these failings, students must live and work with the people; students and peasants attend the same meetings; students help the people with their government and business affairs, with their everyday chores, such as gathering grass for fuel and carrying water, and with planting and harvesting. It is felt that in this way the students gain an intimate knowledge of, and sympathy with, the peasants, and that the good feeling engendered by close cooperation between students and peasants helps to bridge the gulf between the 'intellectuals' and the 'masses'. Furthermore, the students must work for themselves...(and) do many...kinds of hard work during the daily 'production work' period. The peasants also benefit from the new order of things; they have overcome their long-term distrust of the 'intellectual', whom they have ever associated with landlordism and oppression (*ibid.*, pp. 164-5).

The idea of having students and teachers engage in productive work was not only a means of 'proletarianizing' them, it also took a considerable financial burden from

the peasants' backs.

The methods first developed at K'angta and later employed in cheng feng, were used here as well. "The students analyse themselves and discuss and criticize one another to such an extent that it might be said that the student body itself forms part of the curriculum" (ibid., p. 165).

Rigid examination systems were abolished in favor of individual progression on the basis of his or her background and abilities.

University education, however, was a minor aspect of the over-all educational efforts during these years. As more and more cadres were recruited to serve the ever-expanding base areas, they had to be trained. And, beyond them, was a largely illiterate peasant population that had to be mobilized and given political consciousness.

One crucial aspect of people's education was the min-pan concept.

The general procedure seems to have been that the education authorities would get in touch with local leaders in some village, the village 'labor hero' or someone specially respected, and would suggest to them that the village should run its own school. It was explained that the government would help in finding a teacher and in meeting part of the expenses but that the village community itself could determine what should be taught exactly as it wanted (ibid., pp. 37-38)

The people and government were to interact and help each other. Problems were bound to arise. For example, what happened if the people wanted subjects taught that the government was ideologically opposed to, such as Confucian morality? Whereas before cheng feng such wishes would be violently aborted by cadres, after cheng feng these wishes

were often respected and honored, and an attempt would be made to show the peasants, as they were studying these subjects, what was wrong with them. More difficult were such problems as peasants being unwilling to admit the children of peasants too poor to share in the school expenses. These children would often be supported by the government, and it was hoped that with revolution penetrating the villages, such attitudes would disappear.

There were no general or definite rules for min-pan schools. Schools were started in all sorts of ways.¹⁸ "There were no regular time tables because the teaching in every village was arranged in the way which was most convenient to the parents and involved the least interference with the children assisting their parents in production" (Lindsay, p. 38). The courses most frequently in demand were simple literacy, arithmetic and a number of practical subjects. No general rules or standards were to apply. The slogans were 'oppose the old style uniformity' and 'oppose regularity in education' (ibid., p. 38).

The amount of ordinary school education which was of economic value to the ordinary peasant farmer was very small. Except for a limited number in government service, society had comparatively little use for the graduates of the ordinary middle school or university. The economy was so poor that the withdrawal of children from productive work into whole-time education was a heavy burden, and the problem of adult illiteracy was so serious that it was not reasonable to concentrate on the education of children which could produce a literate population only after a time lag of decades.

...The 'people manage, public help' village schools with various arrangements of half-day and alternate-day school met this requirement pretty well. Above this level

¹⁸ See Seybolt's Ph.D. thesis, op. cit., pp. 258-262, for a description of the various types possible.

a regular school system was undesirable... The development of China needed large numbers of personnel with various vocational skills, and the educational system should concentrate on turning out people with the particular forms of training most urgently needed, which was something that varied in different areas and at different times. Even more important than training children was giving further instruction to people who were already working but needed more education to do their work better. The school system must, therefore, be capable of taking in, at every stage above the elementary school level, people with practical experience who needed more theoretical education. Even in general education the problem of educating adults was at least as important as the education of children, and adult education yielded much more rapid social returns (ibid., p. 40).

The most popular form of adult education was the winter school. Apart from this type, there were "newspaper reading groups, getting school children to teach the adults in their families, night schools, combination of education with women's spinning groups, arrangements for cooperative groups to learn characters during rest periods and meal times, etc., etc." (ibid., p. 43). This was social education - education outside of a formal institutional environment, geared to teach all manner of things: politics, literacy, news of what was happening in other parts of China and in the world, accounting, to name just a few. There were two basic wrong tendencies before rectification - the forcing of peasants to attend such groups, and teaching them politics primarily. It was found that peasant needs and desires must first be learned before any educational effort could be implemented. Peasants had to want to learn, and, once that was accomplished, they must be taught subjects they felt to be relevant. Thus, a re-orientation to serving production needs and teaching literacy was initiated.

(In winter schools) the general principle should be unified leadership and scattered study. Under the unified leadership of the Winter School Committees or the People's School Committees there should be free organization and association according to the wishes of the masses, using all kinds and types of organizational form, such as literacy class, woman's literacy class, literacy group, publicity lecture class, newspaper-reading group, abacus group, medical research group, night school, noon school, literacy placards, blackboard newspapers, education on the k'ang, small groups for home education, the father teaching the son and the son the father, the small-teacher system and all kinds of organization joined on to production organizations...In the middle and small towns or fairly large market villages, the working life of the workers, shop assistants and other citizens is not markedly seasonal and the group to be taught is complicated. Here education should be divided and the production unit should be introduced as the educational unit to make the form of organization for the struggle of the masses the form of organization for mass education.¹⁹

In order to encourage parents to send their children to school, April 4th was designated 'Pupils' Day' in 1945. This was an opportunity for parents to see what the children could learn and do, and for parents' views to be aired and discussed. Great emphasis was placed on children helping their parents in production, since this was one of the parents' main grievances. Previously, children had been organized for production, but this was rarely for their own families' benefit. At this time an attempt was made to coordinate such activities as farming the school's plot of land, aiding the families of soldiers, and, at the same time, seeing that children helped their own families.

Such slogans as 'When the days are cold and the ground's frozen, it is time to study. When the flowers bloom and the water's warm, it is time to serve the peasants'

¹⁹ See "Directive on the Development of the Winter-School Movement" (1944), in Lindsay, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80. The emphasis is my own.

and 'every township run one winter school' were used to help spread the winter-school movement.²⁰

Winter schools were to be decentralized (which meant they didn't need a fixed number of students in order to get established) and linked to other movements, such as the sanitation movement, and groups, such as locally stationed soldiers, schools, organizations and the intelligentsia (*ibid.*, p. 227).

The method of instruction in winter school should be flexible and adapted to the subject of instruction, to the type of educational organization, and to the teaching materials... 'the people teaching the people', 'little teachers', individual instruction in conjunction with collective instruction and other approaches, 'teaching first those who come first', 'when the family is really busy, let the students go home', 'rotation teaching', 'teaching at home', 'teaching from door to door'; these or any other approaches may be adopted, provided they are suited to the needs of the people.²¹

The winter-school movement was part of the literacy movement. Although the aims of the literacy movement were high, (to achieve universal literacy in a matter of years), they were not achieved. This was typical of mass education in these years. The methods and forms were new, and often met with some degree of success. However, war-time conditions and material difficulties were serious impediments, and so, resounding successes were not recorded over-all, although they were attained in many specific cases. The very nature of the attempt precluded immediate success, because the type of education envisaged was a long-term affair. And, in these years, the Chinese Communists had

²⁰ See "Border Region Government Directive on Winter Study This Year" (1944), in *Chinese Education*, *op. cit.*, pp. 225-6.

²¹ See "Border Region Supplementary Directive on Winter Study This Year" (1944), in *ibid.*, p. 234.

to think in terms of days, weeks and months rather than years. This situation was to change drastically after 1949. It was so drastic that educational policy was once again relegated to the background. The final chapter will examine what happened in the fifties and early sixties, and will sketch the outlines of education as envisaged in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. An attempt will be made to show that educational policy in 1966 was very similar to that described for the Yenan period.

CHAPTER FOUR

Education From the Fifties to the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution

It is the principles underlying the educational system which form the main link between education in the Yen'an era and in the Cultural Revolution. In the preceding two chapters, these principles and their effect on education in the Yen'an period have been described. In the 1950's, the principles were still in evidence. However, there was another view of education during these years. It was based on the Soviet model and is now linked to Liu Shao-ch'i, who took over the presidency of the People's Republic from Mao in 1958. It has been labelled 'revisionist'. Educational principles were also carried over from the Yen'an era, and these are now labelled 'Maoist', (see Chapter One, p. 1, for the meaning of the term 'Maoist' in this thesis). In the 1950's and in the early 1960's, these two 'lines' (education was only one sector of the society, polity, and economy to be affected by them) were in competition and in conflict with each other. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which erupted full-scale in 1966, was a victory for the 'Maoist' line.

In this chapter, an attempt will be made to sketch the battle of the two lines, 'revisionist' and 'Maoist', as these affected education. As the Maoist line is described, the continuity with the educational principles evolved in the Yen'an period should become clear. The forms that these principles took through the years differed, but the basic ideas, especially that of the 'mass line', remained the same.

There were two trends in the years just before Liberation in 1949 which help explain why the principles developed in those years were pushed aside in the 1950's. One was a stress on local needs and the present. The second trend consisted in differentiating the communist base areas from other capitalist and socialist countries, even from other parts of China. This made the principles developed in the Yen'an years applicable only within a restricted time and place. In those years, the CCP did not regard these principles as having wider ramifications. The Party was very pragmatic in its policies, and, thus, did not feel the need for justifying the universality of the concepts it used to carry through peasant revolution.

'This kind of mass education should have its present and its future. It is its future to enable every worker to understand higher mathematics, physics, and chemistry. It is its present to enable the masses to understand how to participate in guerrilla warfare, how to organize labor power, how to get the most necessary cultural knowledge. Cadres must understand how to become leaders. It is wrong to forsake the future for the present; it is especially wrong to forsake the present for the future. Between the present and the distant future there are, of course, several intermediate stages when the question of advancing to the next educational level will arise, but under present conditions in the base areas, this question should not arise. The system of general education in the base areas at present should be completely renovated and reorganized to accord with the particular needs of mass education and cadre education.¹

The experience of the Soviet Union was therefore rejected in 1944, not because it belied certain Chinese Communist principles, but because China was not in a position to utilize the Soviet experience. In the late 1940's there was increasing praise of the accomplishments of the Soviet Union in various directives issued by the CCP. Especially

¹ "The Problem of Transforming General Education in the Base Areas", a policy statement issued in 1944 which can be found in Chinese Education, op. cit., p. 193. For the 'kind of mass education' referred to, see Chapter Three.

in education, the economic development of China's base areas were at too primitive a stage to justify copying highly complicated educational systems.² The main stress in education in the mid-1940's was on linking production and education. This meant that the type of education given was dependent on the state of production. As the base areas were largely composed of peasants, this meant agrarian production.³

With Liberation in 1949, the whole situation changed, from one of peasant revolution to that of legal government. What made matters even more complicated in education was the fact that before 1949 the Chinese Communists had not held any large-sized cities or well-established universities. Thus, they had no experience of their own to guide them in governing the cities and universities that fell to their power after 1949. It is easy to see why they turned to the Soviet Union for help. This was the one country which they admired and whose experience was in many ways applicable, or so the Chinese Communists thought at the time. The experience of the capitalist nations was rejected outright on ideological grounds.

Fraser refers to the years between 1949 and 1952 as the 'cheng feng era'.⁴ As the CCP came to power throughout the country, it began to lay stress on recruiting workers from the urban centers, in keeping with the Marxist-Leninist stress on the urban proletariat. 'Unusable peasant elements' were dropped from party ranks.⁵ At the other

² See, for example, "On Regulations and Curricula in General Education", 1944, in Chinese Education, op. cit., pp. 195-196.

³ Peter J. Seybolt, "Yenan Education and the Chinese Revolution, 1937-1945", op.cit., pp. 195-198.

⁴ Stewart Fraser, Chinese Communist Education, Vanderbilt University Press, Nashville, 1965, p. 22.

⁵ Franz Schurmann, Ideology and Organization in Communist China, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1971, pp. 168-169.

end of the scale, many intellectuals of 'bourgeois' origin were made to pass through rectification in 1951 and 1952.

One difficulty with intellectuals was that they were needed to staff the administration and bureaucracy, although their class background and political views were often not in accord with communist doctrine. "The cadre, who had been a leader in the revolutionary cause, was now an official in a formal bureaucratic organization." In the period after 1949, the approach was pragmatic. "Except for Party and military matters qualified personnel were in short supply, and people were assigned to jobs they could perform. Even the administrative machinery remained flexible, and much of the work was performed by ad hoc task forces" (Vogel, p. 38).

Within cadre ranks, this situation led to tensions between old cadres with revolutionary experience and commitment, and new ones with formal training, especially as the latter sometimes displaced or were put in charge of the former. This conflict was often put in terms of the 'reds' versus the 'experts'. It was a common theme throughout the fifties, with one side gaining and losing in relation to the other, until the principle of 'red and expert' began to gradually gain ascendancy in the late fifties and in the sixties. By then, an attempt was being made to resolve the contradiction between being politically committed and having certain technical skills.

In the early 1950's, because there was such a great gap in education between the 'experts' and the 'reds', and because there was such a great need for the services of the 'experts', they were favored over the 'reds'. To overcome this shortage, educational and training programs were established. Apart from regular schools, 'people's revolutionary

universities' were set up to train political cadres. This system paralleled the regular educational system. Most of the students came from worker and peasant backgrounds.

"The difficulty in this early period was that the Party schools had just recently been set up, whereas the older schools had a solid tradition" (Schurmann, p. 169).

Another solution to the problem of shortages in personnel was the establishment of short 'rotating training courses' for cadres already assigned to specific jobs. "Of the 2,750,000 cadres in China in mid-1952, 66,000 had graduated from regular universities, 100,000 had been processed at 'people's revolutionary universities', but over 1,000,000 had been trained in rotating training courses" (Vogel, p. 45). It was assumed that they would learn the skills they needed on the job, and so these short courses concentrated on giving cadres basic political training. This was important because many cadres were not Party members, the proportion of non-Party to Party members in cadre ranks having increased after 1949.

Because regular full-time schools were well established in many places, more so, at any rate, than cadre-training institutes, schools gradually took over the function of selecting and evaluating cadres. "By 1955 when the urgent need for new cadres began to level off, many of the cadre schools had been closed down" (*ibid.*, pp. 46-47).

All cadres were required to attend weekly study sessions. Over the years these, because their content remained unchanged, lost their freshness. "What began as a necessity to provide minimal common training has now become a routinized system with a bureaucratic life all its own" (*ibid.*, p. 48). Even in this area, cadres with intellectual training had an easier time than the revolutionary cadres.

"Curricular reform and institutional reform had undoubtedly long been considered but, although some progress had been made up to 1951, the total pattern of higher education had not changed drastically" (Fraser, pp. 27-28). This was in spite of such campaigns as the 'three antis' and the 'five antis', aimed at overcoming such tendencies as waste and bureaucratism in, among other places, the universities.

The total number of universities was reduced. However, in agriculture, forestry, education, medicine, and engineering, the number of schools was increased, "reflecting the change in emphasis towards the founding of specialized and technical institutes" (*ibid.*, pp. 28-29). These changes crystallized during the period of the First Five Year Plan (1953-1957). Along with this orientation went a stress on quality over quantity, "it was education for the immediately educable" (*ibid.*, p. 32).

For those students turned down as a result of the cutbacks in education, it was suggested that "glorious work in the fields and factories should be the goal of the young" (*ibid.*, p. 32). At this time (1953) the measure was viewed as a temporary, and not an ideological, one. The same alternative was devised for those cadres, many of them former guerrillas, with low educational levels. In rural areas their educational lacks would not be as noticeable as in the cities. "In the early years, because almost no workers or peasants could perform more complicated tasks, youths of bourgeois background often rose more rapidly. But these fast-rising cadres, both because of their questionable political past and the resentment aroused from their co-workers who were pushed aside and subordinated to these young officials, were particularly vulnerable in the political campaigns" (Vogel, p. 57).

In short, for a youth who wanted to become a cadre in the years around 1955, education through the regular school system was about the only method open to him or her.

"When the Chinese Communists triumphed in 1949, there no longer was a social system to which they could turn for support, even if they had wanted to. There was no gentry left, and they distrusted the bourgeoisie. But there was a choice of directions. Should they construct organization along the lines they had developed during the ten years of Yen-an or should they emulate the one model they respected above all: the Soviet Union? They chose the latter course, and thus for the first five years of the 1950's, China began rapidly turning into a second Soviet Union. The imposition of bureaucratic organization from the top down proceeded rapidly, symbolized by the elaboration of a vast planning structure. China appeared to be following the road to bureaucratic centralization. If centralization meant the emergence of a new professional elite, the changes in Communist party recruitment in the early 1950's followed the model perfectly. Large numbers of old and new intellectuals were recruited into the Party. Expertise became a prime qualification for Party membership. Untrained rural cadres were dropped from Party rolls" (Schurmann, pp. xlvi-lix).

This reliance on the Soviet Union had important consequences in education. The stress was on the economy. This required skilled technical personnel and education was made to serve these needs. At an even more basic level, the Soviet model of education was adopted and applied wholesale.

With the inauguration of the First Five Year Plan in 1953, the Chinese higher-education system, inadequate to the needs of rapid industrialization, underwent drastic structural transformation. The old KMT system, which had been modeled largely on Anglo-American institutions, now began to be reshaped to Soviet patterns. Soviet teaching plans, curricula, and textbooks were translated without modification so that China could draw on the advanced experience of the Soviet

Union in ... teaching methods and curricula.⁶

Although efforts were made in these years to recruit peasants into the educational system, because economic development and the Soviet educational model were in focus, those students who came from urban bourgeois backgrounds found it easier to progress through such a school system. Moreover, the best schools were in the cities, while the state of education in rural areas was, in general, abysmal. Improvements in rural education were precluded by the fact that the stress was placed on uniformity - uniformity in teaching methods, in curricula, in course content, in entrance requirements, in length of study, and in examinations - all in imitation of the Soviet Union (Munro, pp. 622-623). This naturally placed well-established schools at an advantage. In addition, material and financial resources could not begin to meet such rigid standards as far as setting up rural schools was concerned.

The first major signs of dissatisfaction with this course of events appeared in 1955, when a mass recruitment campaign was organized to promote collectivization (Schurmann, p. xlix). With collectivization, the focus changed from urban areas and heavy industrialization, to rural areas and agriculture. The underpinnings of the First Five Year Plan had to be changed for a number of reasons. It was found that heavy industry alone was impossible. The savings and growth generated by agriculture and light industry were necessary to finance and support heavy industry. In focussing on the education of technological personnel, an elite was forming which was beginning to undermine communist ideology. In order to enable communization, peasants, and the cadres

⁶ Victor Nee, The Cultural Revolution at Peking University, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1969, pp. 12-13.

leading them, required certain general skills. This negated the emphasis on narrow, specialist skills. Finally, bureaucracy was once again, as in the early 1940's, beginning to strangle growth. It was making it difficult for the Party to be responsive to the needs of the rural population (ibid., pp. 97-101). The sufan movement, aimed at combatting bureaucratism, represented an initial attempt to deal with some of these problems. Once again, the 'mass line' came into focus.

The 'revisionists' focussed on industrialization and on emulation of the Soviet Union. They argued that rapid economic development must come first. Only once modernization was completed could the society as a whole become better off and follow the road to socialism and communism. The 'Maoists' were in fundamental disagreement with this view. Their main concerns were social in nature, and their primary focus was the rural population, implemented by such means as the 'mass line'. In the late fifties and early sixties, the debates between the two sides became very heated.

In 1956, "the Party's leadership decided to reassess its policy towards intellectuals and students. As had happened in the Soviet Union, rapid industrialization was demanding increased reliance on the technical expertise of the intelligentsia, and the demand for experts still greatly exceeded the available supply" (Nee, p. 15). Because many cadres were reluctant to loosen political control, a campaign was simultaneously launched to fight the 'three evils' of bureaucratism, sectarianism, and subjectivism. "The original campaign launched in May, 1956, was concerned with the so-called 'rectification' of certain abuses which had developed in various Party organizations. Like so many of the other campaigns originating from within the party for the purpose of removing

dead wood for regeneration, it was applicable first to the cadres within the government and then later directed into the broader spheres of administration, education, state enterprises, and so on" (Fraser, p. 35).

Then, in early 1957, a second movement began while the rectification campaign was still in progress. It was a movement of 'blooming and contending', and it paralleled the rectification campaign (ibid., pp. 35-36).

Although at first reluctant, a group of students at Peking University (Peita) finally erected the first 'big character' wall poster in criticism of the Party's treatment of intellectuals. The 'Hundred Flowers' movement was on its way, as hundreds of students from other major universities followed this lead. The main argument in the criticism was that the Party was not living up to its professed ideals, while "the main thrust of the students' criticism was directed against the Party bureaucracy, which many felt had been transformed from a revolutionary organization into an elite club" (Nee, p. 16).

In May, 1957, China experienced a student outburst in many ways similar to the Cultural Revolution. In February of that year, Mao Tse-tung made his long speech 'On the Correct Handling of Internal Contradictions Within the People'. ... (I)n April, a rectification movement was launched in the cities. People were urged to criticize the shortcomings of cadres. As has happened during the Cultural Revolution, wall posters appeared in large numbers... (T)he initial phase of the rectification, however, got out of hand. In May a new kind of wall poster appeared, attacking the fundamental principles on which Communist rule was based. They first became evident in the National Aviation University (during the Cultural Revolution a key center of the Red Guards), and then spread to Peking University... For weeks, Party cadres were the targets of bitter attack. It was reported that the Politburo was in a state of paralysis. Classes were suspended. Students every day mounted soap boxes and

harangued their fellow students.

...The Party pulled itself together and went on a counterattack, launching the anti-rightist movement. By the winter of 1957/58, thousands of students, professors, administrators, technicians, and scientists had been ... sent down (hsiafang) to the 'front lines of production' (Schurmann, pp. 583-584).

Taking into consideration the class composition of most university students and faculty and the tradition of scholar rule in China, the reason for the anti-rightist campaign becomes understandable. For example, at Peita, eighty per cent of university students and ninety-eight per cent of the professors came from bourgeois families (Fraser, p. 44). "In China, where intellectuals historically have had a high degree of access to political power, the student criticism of the Party can be interpreted as a bid to wrest political power from the hands of poorly educated Party cadres, many of whom had been workers and peasants" (Nee, p. 18).

Though most Peita students criticized the Party from the standpoint of egalitarian ideals, they had not come to terms with their own intellectual elitism. The very same students who had criticized Party elitism opposed the work-study program which called on intellectuals to combine manual labor with mental labor...Some students and teachers demanded that Party committees either be withdrawn from educational institutions or limited in power - in order to 'let the professors run the universities'. (ibid., pp. 17-18).

The form that this criticism took was one of the factors which led Mao to proclaim the Great Leap Forward. It was a renunciation of the Soviet model for social change, and it instituted an educational revolution concerned with educating a " 'new socialist man', who had both political consciousness and culture and who was capable of both mental and physical labor" (ibid., p. 20).

Whereas the anti-rightist movement was concerned primarily with intellectuals, from August 1957 another movement came into being concerned primarily with the peasantry – the 'socialist education' movement. While many of the intellectuals were 'sent down' to villages or factories, peasants and workers received much attention. Major efforts were made to enrol them in schools of various sorts, and an attempt was made to de-mystify 'technology'. Peasants and workers were told that they, too, could contribute to the building of the economy.

On September 19, 1958, a new educational policy was announced. Education was to be made universal, serving the needs of the proletariat and closely linked to productive labor. Regular schools were to set up farms and factories, while factories and cooperatives were to set up their own schools. In order that study not be divorced from labor, part-time study was introduced. This was the 'half-work half-study' system.⁷

Emphasis was taken away allowing intellectuals to express themselves and focussed instead on the masses. Mao believed that it was the masses who possessed the creativity and initiative to allow the goals of the Party to be achieved (Schurmann, p. 85). 'Freedom' was not totally suppressed. It was felt that intellectuals were abusing their positions, and, thus, their interests had to be subordinated to those of the masses. In turn, the latter were to be granted 'freedom'.

Expansion of enrolment to include more students of worker and peasant origins affected all levels of the educational system – including the universities. The President

⁷ John Gardner, "Educated Youth and Urban-Rural Inequalities", in The City in Communist China, edited by John Wilson Lewis, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1971, p. 243.

of Tsinghua University is quoted as saying: "The educational institution becomes not just a school, but at the same time a research institute, factory, designing institute, and building concern. An end is put to the traditional concept of a school as a consumer unit, an ivory tower / far removed / from social life. Our policy bridges the gap between educational and production units" (Nee, pp. 21-22).

One of the campaigns launched during the period of the Great Leap Forward was the 'three unifications' movement, which was concerned with uniting cadres (leaders), technicians (intellectuals) and workers and peasants (masses) in the form of work teams. This was a practical attempt at resolving the internal contradictions among the people through the unity of opposites; "each was expected in effect to become the other: workers becoming technicians, technicians becoming workers, and both sharing leadership with the cadres" (Schurmann, p. 76). This concept helps explain the ideological importance of the hsia fang movement. Besides helping resolve these contradictions, if properly carried out hsia fang could also help resolve the differences between mental and manual labor, and between cities and the countryside.

In the earlier years, around 1956, hsia fang was primarily aimed at paring down administrative fat by sending personnel to the countryside. They were not expected to engage in manual labor, until the 'Hundred Flowers' period showed the severity of the 'problem of the intellectuals'. It was at this point that hsia fang changed from a 'movement' to a permanent 'system'.⁸ In September, 1958, the Party issued a directive stating that "workers of all government organizations, troops, enterprises and industries,

⁸ Renesselaer W. Lee III, "The Hsia Fang System: Marxism and Modernization", in The China Quarterly, No. 37, January-March 1969, p. 47.

except those too old or too sick to take part in physical labor, ... shall spend at least one month a year in physical labor" (ibid., p. 47).

The Chinese Communists see separation from labour as a hindrance to development, primarily for the following reasons: first, because it fosters a set of elite values that are antithetical to production and capital accumulation; second, because it wastes human resources and burdens the state with unnecessary administrative expenses; and, third, because it gives rise to a bureaucratic 'style' of work which is divorced from the immediate problem of production and which lowers the morale of producers" (ibid., p. 52).

Earlier in this chapter, it was stated that in the early years of the People's Republic there was a struggle between the 'reds' and the 'experts'. Hsia fang was one method whereby cadres and intellectuals could become both 'red and expert', by participating in the struggle of production, and thus being politically remoulded, and by utilizing their skills in a practical manner, thus acquiring still more 'expertise'. As a major goal of the Great Leap Forward was communization, it was very important that the peasantry unite with cadres and intellectuals, receiving leadership and expert guidance while 'proletarianizing' these two groups. "Hsia fang hence served a dual purpose in Communist China: by transferring personnel from where they were not needed to places where they were, it both cut administrative expenses and freed human resources for the development of production" (ibid., p. 58).

Another important system that the 'educational revolution' brought to the fore was the half-work half-study schools. While factories and communes were to set up schools, schools in their turn were to set up work shops or agricultural plots. This system was crucial in getting the workers and the peasantry involved in education. By mixing education and production, government expenses were cut down and peasants were not deprived of

the labor power of their children. Thus, some form of education became available for a much larger segment of the population than was possible under the regular, full-time school system. Half-work half-study programs were also important in those educational institutions which had a tendency to produce technical and intellectual elites. And hsia fang brought people to the villages who could teach culture and impart skills to the local populace, thus enlarging the teaching ranks.

Whereas in 1966 the achievements of the Great Leap Forward would be proclaimed, in 1959 an attack was mounted against both the movement and Mao. "In this new climate, much of China's Educational Revolution began to be slowly undermined. Reforms were criticized, particularly by professors and university presidents, for 'lowering the quality of academic life'; many demanded a concerted effort to raise academic and professional standards. On the whole, this effort was supported by most high Party officials, and the Party adopted the slogan 'advancing science' in the higher education system' (Nee, p. 27).

The change was reflected at Peita, for example, by the appointment of a new president and secretary to the University's Party Committee - Lu P'ing. He admired the process of Soviet industrialization, and recognized the importance of a 'technical and managerial intelligentsia' in that process. He sought to model Peita on Moscow University, and had educational efforts concentrated on training highly skilled technocrats. Even Party cadres assigned to work at Peita were judged according to 'professional' standards. Those cadres from peasant and working-class backgrounds consequently felt intimidated. The stress was on 'careers'. The same applied to students and professors. A great number of students who had recently been recruited from the countryside were expelled.

A similar process was going on at other universities (ibid., pp. 28-33).

Between 1958 and 1966 there were two different approaches to education. One was Maoist, "rural-oriented and egalitarian, viewing education as the means by which the 'three major differences' between town and country, workers and peasants, and mental and manual labor could be rapidly eliminated." "Instead of treating education as a competitive process by which the most able were selected and trained as an elite, the Maoist approach was intended to cultivate all-around and modest skills in as many people as possible" (Gardner, p. 236). This allowed flexibility, because people with diverse skills could shift from post to post to suit economic necessity. Education and production were to be closely integrated. Courses were to be short and pruned of superfluous material. Theory and practice were to be united. Half-work half-study schools were a means to this end.

The notion that the educated should engage in manual labor - an unusual idea in any society - is particularly novel in the Chinese context, where the educated had traditionally treated physical work with contempt; but from Mao's point of view it was a prerequisite for the development of a new leadership style. By working in the fields and factories, the educated would develop an appreciation of the problems facing the masses and would be encouraged to use their skills to solve them. Instead of acting as remote 'experts' directing the peasants to implement innovations, and thus likely to cause resentment if not non-compliance, they would be able to 'lead from within' by example and persuasion. While teaching they would themselves be taught (ibid., p. 237).

The second approach has been labelled 'Liuist' (ibid., p. 238). It was urban-oriented and elitist. It followed the Soviet pattern of education. The arguments were primarily economic, "taking the view that scarce resources should be spent on creating an educated elite of 'professionals'." They "argued for educating the most talented to a high

degree, and consequently were happy to preserve and develop the full-time schools and universities. Access to education, particularly higher education, was to be determined primarily by academic ability, a policy that favored urban children from middle-class families." "According to this view political activism was no substitute for professional knowledge" (ibid., p. 238). Following the economic difficulties subsequent to the Great Leap Forward, the Liuists gained the upper hand, especially in the early 1960's.

Not only did the half-work half-study schools suffer as a result of this shift in orientation, but many elementary schools, campaigns to eliminate illiteracy, and spare-time education, especially in rural areas, were also halted. The half-work half-study system was revived in 1964, when Mao once again was able to gain political ascendancy. But at that time these schools were set in competition with the regular, full-time schools. Educational policy did not take into account the Maoist ideological underpinnings of the half-work half-study schools. This led to a 'two-track' system of education (ibid., p. 247).

The half-work half-study system was seen by many not as a superior innovation with which to replace existing institutions, or even as 'separate but equal'. In the eyes of many cadres and 'the masses' themselves, half-work half-study schools were inferior institutions designed to provide a limited education for the children of peasants and workers or to serve as preparatory establishments to 'feed' the full-time system (ibid., pp. 247-248).

The curriculum in these schools was the same as that in the full-time institutions. Learning was by rote and the subjects were abstract, not linked to practical matters. In other words, the half-time schools were set in competition with full-time schools, as if there should be no difference in their orientation.

If children from peasant families concentrated on their studies, their parents lost their labor. If they helped their families in production, they could not hope to

compete against children from richer backgrounds. If they met with success at school, their expectations tended to rise, and they became dissatisfied with their lot in life. In addition, the 'book knowledge' they received was of little practical value to the communes. "Thus a situation common to many underdeveloped countries developed, in which the education system produced large numbers of youths who, though convinced of their own superiority, possessed skills of limited value and hence were condemned to lives of dissatisfaction" (ibid., p. 249).

By 1961, not only had the movement against the educational revolution rejected the half-work half-study concept, it began to call for an emphasis on quality over quantity. There were demands to give the best of the full-time schools better facilities. In 1962, a directive was issued to all provinces and municipalities "outlining a program to 'elevate' the quality of education. Directors of education at the provincial and municipal levels were called on to select a number of 'key schools' from among the universities, secondary schools, and primary schools. In May 1963 directors of educational bureaus at the provincial level met at a special conference in which plans were drawn up to establish a system of elite schools" (Nee, pp. 37-38). These schools came to be known during the Cultural Revolution as 'little pagodas'. In order to get into these schools, students had to pass rigorous examinations, which included such subjects as foreign languages, thus drastically cutting down the chances of students from peasant or working-class backgrounds.

Whatever their views on education in general, many members of the increasingly routinized and urbanized party bureaucracy were determined to promote an elitist system for the benefit of their own children. The provision of schools either entirely or largely for the children of cadres had begun in the border areas before

Liberation. After 1949 they had been established in the major cities, where they became models for the policy of 'complete Sovietization'...Some leaders ... had argued from the early 1950's that such schools should be absorbed into the ordinary educational system, but they had been opposed, particularly by the party committee of Peking, in which city such schools were of course most prevalent. In 1955 the schools had been criticized by 'revolutionary comrades' in the primary education bureau of the Ministry of Education, who had argued that they were extremely expensive and moreover produced graduates who regarded themselves as 'new aristocrats'. The municipal party committee's Department of Education, however, insisting that Peking, being the capital, was a special case, not only retained the existing schools but set up new ones. Furthermore, in 1958 and thereafter as a result of Soviet influence, Khrushchev's 1956 call for boarding schools was apparently taken up by Liu Shao-ch'i, who announced that such schools were fully in accord with true Communism and thus should be established for cadre's children. These schools existed not only for the civilian bureaucracy, but also for the PLA until they were abolished by Lin Piao in 1963 (Gardner, p. 256).

Most of these schools became 'little pagodas'. The dangers became obvious. Not only were cadre's children tending to think of themselves as the political heirs to the revolution, having been 'born red', they were being given, in addition, special skills in these schools which further enabled them to set themselves above the general population. The danger of creating a new 'ruling class', and thus subverting the revolution, was very great. It was strengthened in the 'little pagodas' and in institutions of higher education as stress on 'professionalism' allowed teaching staff with bourgeois backgrounds and orientations to take control. As far as quality and academic achievement were concerned, many of the results were good, particularly in the fields of science and engineering. But the social consequences were not.

Graduates who could impress university committees which determined job allocations could pursue careers as 'high caliber cadres' or 'red engineers'. Their living standards would be relatively high. They could remain in the cities. Thus, their contact with the rural population was virtually non-existent, since they could go from school to work without ever having to work in the fields (ibid., pp. 267-8).

The Liuist line was especially harmful to the whole concept of hsia fang.

This system was greatly distorted in the implementation. Students at the better schools were exempted from taking part. "Furthermore, in some instances, cadres used the countryside as a dumping ground for the political undesirables among the young" (ibid., p. 269). Hsia fang was often regarded as a punishment or as a temporary measure to help certain youths progress up the ladder of success upon their return to the cities and towns. As cadres and teachers were required to send a certain quota of students to the villages, they often used coercion or painted idealistic pictures of rural life in order to persuade students to go.

Many of these youths underwent enormous suffering in the villages. Not only were they unused to rural life, they often suffered discrimination at the hands of peasants and village cadres, who resented having to feed them and often regarded them as 'social misfits'.

Consequently, the educated youths came to constitute what was possibly the most explosive element in Chinese society. Sharing with the peasant youths the general lack of opportunity for career advancement vis-a-vis the 'intellectual aristocracy' of the cities, they suffered from the additional disadvantages we have mentioned. Having experienced city life, and having been 'rejected'

by the system, they, more than most, were a frustrated and disappointed group (ibid., p. 276).

In 1966, millions of these young people were to return to the towns and cities, on the pretext of 'making revolution'. Their grievances were manifested both in the violence of their attacks and in their refusal to return to the countryside at the request of the leaders of the Cultural Revolution.

in 1961-62, Liu Shao-ch'i initiated a 'relaxation' period. After the policies of the Great Leap Forward and the anti-rightist movement when intellectuals were subjected to severe criticism, this period represented a loosening of control over them, while cadres underwent rectification. "In large part, this shift was due to the complete withdrawal of Soviet scientific and technical experts occurring at the same time as the disruptions of the Great Leap Forward hit the population most severely."⁹ Unlike the 'Hundred Flowers' period, most intellectuals and students were afraid to participate in this movement. Most of the criticism came from high-level Party officials in the Propaganda Department and in the Peking Party Committee, who were responsible for implementing the 'relaxation'. "(W)hereas in 1956 and the first half of 1957 the more radical critics dared to challenge the one-party rule of the CCP, in 1961-62 these officials did not hit at the Party of which they were part, but aimed directly at Mao himself" (ibid., p. 68). Along with Mao, his policies in the Great Leap Forward were likewise attacked.

The crises created by the Great Leap Forward - the food shortages, the precarious economy, and low morale - made it difficult for Mao to launch a counterattack as early as 1961-62. Mao endured considerable criticism in this period, but by the fall of 1962, as conditions began to take an upswing, Mao undertook a counterattack ... Beginning at the Tenth Plenum in the fall of 1962 he

⁹ Merle Goldman, "The Unique 'Blooming and Contending' of 1961-62," in The China Quarterly, No. 37, January-March 1969, p. 59.

initiated not a purge but a Socialist Education Campaign, with a content almost identical with that of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. An important component of the series of campaigns which began in the fall of 1962 was the attempt to rehabilitate the image of Chairman Mao.¹⁰

As part of the Socialist Education Campaign, which was a rural-oriented one, Mao, in 1962, sent students to the countryside in the form of 'work teams'. They were to help poor and lower-middle peasants organize themselves in order to check capitalistic trends in the villages and criticize corrupt cadres. Work teams were also sent into the cities and universities, although on a more limited scale. A work team arrived at Peita, but Lu P'ing, apparently fearing criticism, ordered it to undergo rectification. When its members refused, he had it recalled. He also had all those Party members who had begun to criticize him sent to 'rectification sessions' (Nee, p. 41).

In May, 1966, a Central Committee circular was issued, ordering the launching of a full-scale criticism of Wu Han, a prominent writer who had been attacking Mao by implication in his writings. Lu, as well as the mayor of Peking, P'eng Chen, failed to comply, and a big-character poster was erected by members of the philosophy department criticizing them. This was the start of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Lu responded by mobilizing the support of the Communist Youth League (*ibid.*, p. 57). With the support of Chairman Mao, mass meetings were called and the battles between the two 'lines' at Peita came into the open.

Around June 7, a work team arrived to re-organize the leadership of the cultural revolution at Peita. By June 12, it had locked the gates of the university and a

¹⁰ Ezra F. Vogel, "Comments", in China in Crisis, op. cit., p. 567.

period later known as the '50 days of white terror' ensued. The rebel students lost control while the work team took over the previous school administration. It enjoyed the direct support of Liu Shao-ch'i (ibid., p. 64). Finally, on July 18, Mao returned to Peking from Shanghai, where he had been since the previous November. He criticized the conduct of the work teams. They were disbanded on July 26, following a visit by a number of top Maoist officials, including Chiang Ch'ing, Mao's wife, to Peita (ibid., p. 67). Mass meetings followed. They criticized the old administrations, and efforts were made to bring the university more in line with Maoist ideals.

In this way the power struggle between Mao Tse-tung and Liu Shao-ch'i was brought into the schools. Youth represented a crucial issue in this struggle, because at this time there was much debate about the 'successor generation' to the revolution. Most top Party officials were advanced in age, and, thus, the question of which side could win over the youth of the country became crucial.

The youth organization appended to the CCP, the Communist Youth League, suffered from the same elitist tendencies as did the schools. In fact, the two were linked: membership in the Communist Youth League usually came about through the school system. For this reason another youth group, the Red Guards, came into existence to criticize these groups. They came chiefly from the secondary schools, and with the start of the Cultural Revolution, they left in order to bring revolution to other schools. Many underwent 'long marches' in the countryside in imitation of the original 'Long March', which was seen as the model for tempering revolutionaries. Most classes were suspended in the year 1966-67, to allow for these various projects (Schurmann, p. 590). "The Red Guards appear to have begun as study groups in the great universities of Peking formed to denounce

party cadres of those universities who were in league with P'eng Chen, head of the Peking City party organization. Though as many as a million student Red Guards existed by August, it was not until August 18, after the Eleventh Plenum (where opposition to Mao was voiced) that a great demonstration on T'ien-an-men Square made them into a national movement."¹¹ It was on T'ien-an-men Square that Chairman Mao symbolically allowed a Red Guard to present him with the arm band of the young rebels, thus becoming a Red Guard himself.

The Red Guards were by no means a unified group. There were many factions, which often engaged in pitched battles with each other. Their chief function was criticism, and this they did all the way up to and including the CCP. Once the attack on the Party was over orders were sent out for the Red Guards to return to their own schools and resume their studies. The period of destruction, of tearing down, was seen as necessary before re-construction could be initiated.¹²

(T)he words chosen to designate this vast purge: 'Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution' /are significant/. 'Great' conjures up the Great Leap Forward - what it signifies is a campaign of nationwide proportions going into the deepest fabric of society. 'Proletarian' implies anti-bourgeois and so means that the targets are mainly those of the city and not of the country (in fact, the Red Guard movement has been almost entirely an urban phenomenon). 'Culture' means ideology and so the basic values which guide human behavior. 'Revolution' is the most awesome sounding word of all, for it connotes a change of such magnitude that what follows must be radically different. Not since the land reform had the Chinese Communists used the word 'revolution' to designate a domestic campaign. What appears to

¹¹ Franz Schurmann, "The Attack of the Cultural Revolution on Ideology and Organization", in China in Crisis, op. cit., p. 525.

¹² Peter J. Seybolt, Revolutionary Education in China, Introduction, Draft copy, 1973, pp. 10-11.

emerge from this is a movement determined to transform the very nature of the CCP (Schurmann, p. 542).

Louis Barcata interviewed a number of people in China about the Cultural Revolution, which was going on while he was visiting. The following quote is given by a doctor in Shanghai, and it aptly summarizes what, in essence, the movement was all about.

"(In the Great Leap Forward), Mao had had the inspirations, but Liu had obstructed their realizations ... People abroad were crippled with laughter when they saw how our house boys, agricultural workers, bus conductors, and teachers were 'cooking steel' in their back yards and producing a product that could not even be utilized.

"As you can imagine, these developments provided ammunition for serious conflict. People began to refer to Liu as 'China's Khrushchev'. What did this mean? It meant that he was considered the advocate of reason, of 'the possible'. But what sort of concept is this for a country in which, from a practical point of view, nothing was 'possible', among a people which did not want to believe that they could achieve the standards of a modern industrial state within only a few generations?

"We were compelled to attempt the impossible, to tear down the wall of reality, to penetrate the barriers of reason. We were forced to pursue a vision. But Liu didn't like that...Liu's house would be safe and provide protection against all storms, but it would take him a hundred years to build it." ¹³

In the schools, the Cultural Revolution was initially directed at breaking down the control the CCP had over them. Most of the issues centered around the fact that, under the old system, students of worker, peasant, or soldier background had suffered

¹³ Louis Barcata, China in the Throes of the Cultural Revolution, Hart Publishing Company, Inc., New York City, 1968, pp. 120-121.

discrimination. All enrolment procedures and examinations were suspended until the situation could be studied and re-organized.¹⁴

Entrance examinations and age distinctions were abolished. The revolutionary committees of factories, communes or other places of work became responsible for choosing candidates for higher education, although the university revolutionary committees could turn down clearly unqualified candidates. It became mandatory for every university student to have had at least two years' working experience after graduating from secondary school before he or she was accepted. Upon graduation from university, they were to return to their place of work. "The stipulation that one return to the work unit is designed to circumvent the phenomenon, so common in largely agrarian countries, of having the educated few congregate in the cities, often without jobs commensurate with the kind of education they have received, and contributing little to the welfare of anyone but themselves" (Seybolt, p. 18).

The emphasis on university education has been halted. "As of October, 1971, only one quarter of the universities operating before the Cultural Revolution were admitting students. On the other hand, the number of both schools and students at the elementary and secondary levels have grown enormously since 1968" (*ibid.*, p. 18). This reflects a new focus, away from the acquisition of highly specialized skills by a small proportion of the population, to the acquisition of relatively simple ones by a much broader segment. This is in line with the Maoist maxim that the educational system of a society and its economic base should be aligned.

¹⁴ Franz Schurmann, Ideology and Organization in Communist China, *op. cit.*, pp. 582-583.

All educational institutions are being decentralized, rather than being concentrated at specific points (which were usually in towns and cities). Many higher educational institutions have branches in rural areas, while others, especially technical training institutes, are hooked up to factories and communes. The idea of 'popular-management, public help' is coming into its own again, with the emphasis on self-reliance. "This has resulted in the creation of a tremendous number of new schools, especially in the countryside. Obviously this expansion has been possible only because former conceptions of proper teaching personnel, teaching methods, and course content have been drastically altered" (ibid., p. 21).

Teaching ranks have been enlarged by the influx of many workers, peasants, officials, and other people with diverse talents. The emphasis being on practical skills, industrial and agricultural workers have much to teach, not only in schools, but in factories and on the farms. This goes a long way in alleviating the shortage of teachers.

There is no uniformity as to teaching methods, other than the principles underlying them, first developed at K'angta (ibid., p. 22). Small group discussions and co-operative study have replaced the lecture system. Examinations are now used as a teaching aid, not a means for individual advancement. Criticism and self-criticism sessions are a normal part of life for both students and teachers. Political study is once more an important part of the curriculum.

The 'dual school system' has been abolished. Schools have set up factories and farms, while factories and communes have established schools. Thus, the half-work

half-study concept has been given predominance and generalized throughout the educational system.

Course content has been pared, the slogan being 'few but essential'. "Much of the technical curriculum follows directly from the association of schools with various work units. In some higher level schools, students bring problems from their particular factory or commune which the class attempts to analyse and solve. General principles are learned from the study of particular cases" (*ibid.*, p. 30).

(C)huan in Chinese does not mean 'expert' or 'skilled' as much as 'specialized' in one single field. Dedication to the study of a narrow technique does not necessarily imply proficiency in its application... Besides, in China as elsewhere, employment planning is difficult. If young people cannot, and above all will not, do jobs which do not fall exactly within their special domain, the economic balance and progress might be endangered... (T)oo many academic scientists and technicians have been trained in recent years... (T)he massive effort started in 1958 to enrol more students in the scientific departments had not been completely discontinued, while the rate of industrialization launched by the Great Leap Forward had been much slowed, and the basic orientation of education had moved from people's science to specialists' science. The countryside was in desperate need of more, and more professional manpower, but new trainees were too learned, and equally too ignorant, to be of real use. At the same time, the already over-staffed urban industry could not absorb them all.¹⁵

Young people's attitudes towards themselves, their work, and the people are also being given much attention. The relationship between city and countryside has changed. Now the cities seek to emulate the rural areas in the half-work half-study programs (*ibid.*, p. 31).

¹⁵ Marianne Bastid, "Economic Necessity and Political Ideals in Educational Reform During the Cultural Revolution", in The China Quarterly, No. 42, April-June 1970, pp.25-26.

Students are given more representation through such means as the school's revolutionary committee, but they are not to take control. Control over schools is to be given to those who will make use of the graduates - such as communes, factories and work brigades.

It should be pointed out that none of the basic principles of the current educational revolution is new. Almost all of them had been fully conceptualized by the mid-1940's...What is new today is the way in which the basic principles are being employed and, in some cases, the fact that they are being employed (Seybolt, p. 11).

Rather than aiming at establishing a uniform system, local strengths, and weaknesses, are emphasized. Diversity and experimentation are the keynotes. Great efforts are made to prevent bureaucratic build-up and waste. "An institution which came into being during the Cultural Revolution for dealing with the bureaucratic situation is the May 7 Cadre Schools" (*ibid.*, p. 13). In these schools, emphasis is placed on criticism and self-criticism especially in relation to the work done by the cadres, and on the 'mass line'. Even here, study is integrated with work. In fact, many of the schools are located in wasteland areas, where cadres try to reclaim the land and make it productive. Periodic attendance by most cadres at these schools is mandatory. "The May 7 Schools represent a uniquely Chinese effort to curb the tendency of officialdom to become a special interest group and, in effect, a new ruling class (*ibid.*, p. 13).

Certainly, the Maoists focus on the success stories. There are probably many failures and abuses of the new system. But the important point is that this is the orientation of education, one radically different from those of the Soviet Union and Western countries. It raises to the fore the question of whom education should benefit and for what purposes it should be undertaken. In answering those questions, the Maoists have

visualized a new type of education, one that starts 'from the masses' and goes 'to the masses'. The differences in approach that this new orientation brings about is often illustrated in Chinese newspapers.

In conclusion, I would like to quote from one of these articles in order to show the difference in perspective. The writer is a professor who had taught for forty years in the civil engineering department at Tsinghua University.

(I)n 1959 I had headed a group of students in doing research on treating industrial wastes in a coking plant. But...the factory put profits in command and paid no attention to such matters. I myself wanted to boost my reputation by writing a thesis or working out a theoretical formula during the research. But after working more than six months, I failed to solve any problem except writing a thesis which was of no practical value. In 1970, several other teachers and I went to a petrol-chemical plant to study how to handle waste liquid, a problem in urgent need of solving. If the large quantity of polluted water drained off daily from the plant were not properly handled, they would affect the well-being and health of the hundreds of thousands of people living along the lower reaches of a river. Workers and technicians got down to settling the question. We were deeply moved by their revolutionary enthusiasm. We also took part in the job. Together we studied Chairman Mao's works and carried out our experiments. Through various experiments, we settled in two months an important technical question concerning waste-liquid treatment in their plant.¹⁶

¹⁶ "Revolution in Education: Our Experience", In Peking Review, No. 38, Sept. 17, 1971, p. 10.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

The scope of this thesis is so wide that many subjects which deserve far more attention were merely touched upon. A main one is the 'problem of the intellectuals' in a society evolving towards communism. It brings to the fore another important area, that of elites. The problems of elite formation are endemic in many Third-World countries. In China, while intellectual skills are valued, an enormous amount of energy is poured into the prevention of elite formation. Inasmuch as the domination of elites in these societies is viewed negatively, the experience of the Chinese Communists is relevant as an example of how one might handle the situation.

Another area that could do with much more analysis is the effects of bureaucratization on social and economic progress. The Chinese Communists tend to view bureaucracy as a necessary evil that must be toned down as much as possible. Here, too, is an area that other Third-World countries might look into and learn about in relation to the Chinese experience.

A major question that might be asked is whether 'quality' in education is sacrificed when the 'mass line' is implemented. First of all, the term 'quality' has to be defined in relation to the goals of a social system. When a model of education that paralleled the experience of the Soviet Union was being pursued, many specialized technicians who helped modernize the economy were graduated, and their services were put to good use. Quality in education then was evolving along a path similar to what would constitute

quality education in Western countries. When the 'mass line' is being followed, quality takes on a different meaning. Those people who receive a quality education are those workers and peasants able to learn skills useful to their work, and those intellectuals who are able to put their knowledge at the service not only of the economy, but also of the society. Quality takes on social, rather than economic, connotations. Does the economy suffer? In the short run, perhaps it does. But the argument is that in the long run more people receive more skills than is possible under the Western system. Individuals receive a broader education, that is, they learn a fairly wide range of skills. This is seen as being important not only within the context of forming a 'communist man', but within that of the Chinese economy. China is still a very poor and economically backward country. Hence, people who can take on a variety of tasks and roles are judged, in the long run, to be more valuable than those with very specific and narrow skills. The argument centers around the fact that economic development does not have to follow the Western road. Judging the economic performance of most Third-World countries today, whether a country the size of China can modernize successfully along Western lines is not a fait accompli.

There is an implication here; namely, that the Chinese experience is relevant to other countries, especially those constituting what is known as the Third World. I believe that this experience, especially in the educational sphere, is an example which other countries would do well to note. However, I am not sure to what extent, if any, this experience can be copied without recourse to social revolution, for the model of education I have described here was born in, and based upon, rural revolution. Guerrilla warfare, and peasant mobilization and participation in revolution, were important inputs to education

as developed in the Communist base areas in the 1940's. The spirit of these inputs has been judged crucial, and efforts have been made to keep that spirit alive. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is the latest, and greatest, attempt to do this. Without that spirit, education has a tendency to slide into the background and serve other interests, such as economic development and the formation of an intellectual 'ruling class'. Contradictions exist within the society, and battles must be fought constantly in order to ensure that the workers and peasants remain the dominant social classes. The type of education described here is in the service of these classes, and, thus, it becomes part of the struggle. The concept of the 'permanent revolution' is a central fact of Chinese life.

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