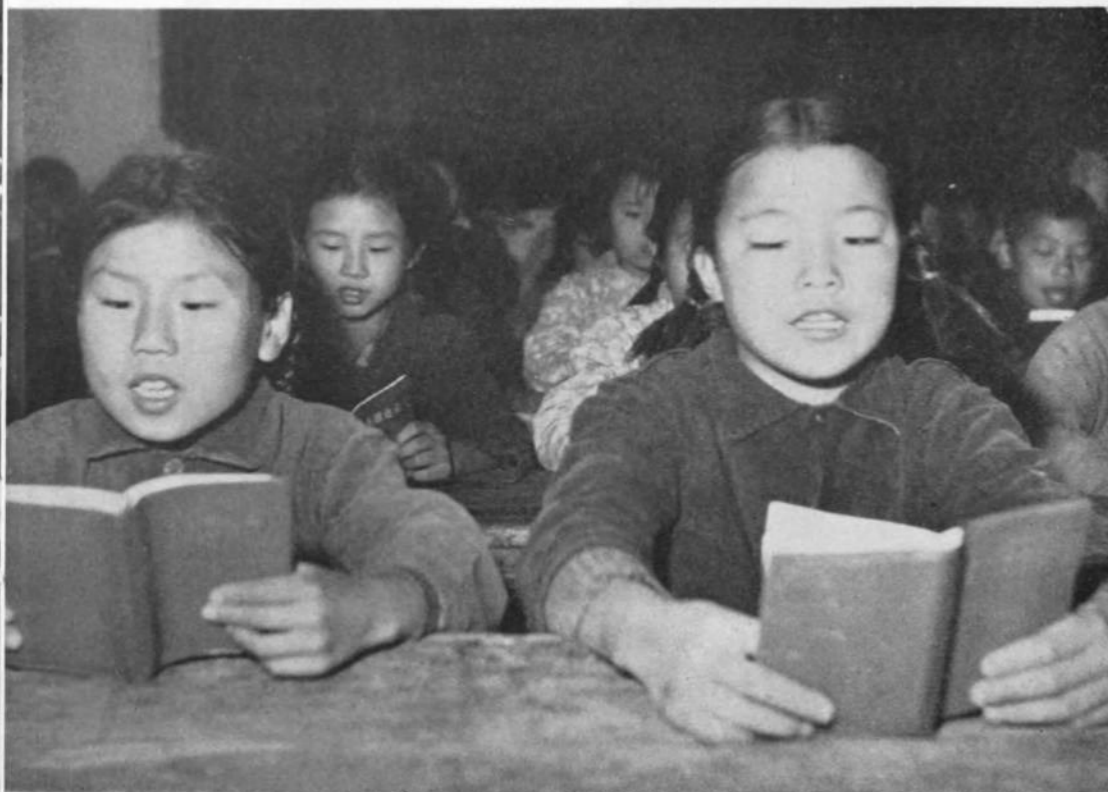


THE REVOLUTION IN EDUCATION IN PROGRESS

Fourth-grade pupils study quotations from Chairman Mao.



Cheering revolutionary teachers and students of Shanghai University in Shanghai pledge to carry out Chairman Mao's latest instruction on the proletarian revolution in education.

THE proletarian revolution in education should be carried out by relying on the mass of revolutionary students, teachers and workers in the schools, by relying on the activists among them, namely, those proletarian revolutionaries who are determined to carry the great proletarian cultural revolution through to the end." Since this call from our respected and beloved great leader Chairman Mao, the revolution to smash the old educational system and clear the way for creating a proletarian educational system has been sweeping the length and breadth of the country.

China's old educational system was permeated with the poison of feudalism, capitalism and revisionism. China's Khrushchov and his agents in the education field, Lu Ting-yi and his like, used this system to train revisionist successors who would bring about the restoration of capitalism. That

system must be thoroughly transformed into one which will train successors for the revolutionary cause of the proletariat.

Transformation of the old educational system and the old principles and methods of teaching is an extremely important task of the great proletarian cultural revolution set forth in the Party Central Committee's August 8, 1966 decision formulated under the personal guidance of Chairman Mao. Earlier, on May 7, 1966, Chairman Mao had laid down the basic guide for the revolution in education. He said: "While their [the students'] main task is to study, in addition to their studies they should learn other things, that is, industrial work, farming and military affairs. They should also criticize the bourgeoisie. The period of schooling should be shortened, education should be revolutionized, and the domination of our schools by bourgeois intel-

lectuals should by no means be allowed to continue."

In the 17 years from the founding of the People's Republic to 1966 when the cultural revolution began, China's Khrushchov promoted a revisionist line for education. He opposed the red flag of proletarian education raised by Chairman Mao, and covered up his opposition by waving countless "red flags", that is, revolutionary-sounding slogans which were actually counter-revolutionary in content. The revolutionary teachers and students, however, nurtured on Mao Tse-tung's thought, resolutely defended the proletarian line for education put forward by Chairman Mao. In this field, as in all others, there was a continual struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between the socialist and capitalist road and between the proletarian revolutionary line and the bourgeois reactionary line.

When Chairman Mao launched the cultural revolution in 1966, Peng Chen, a member of the same counter-revolutionary revisionist clique as Lu Ting-yi, tried to sabotage the movement so that they could carry on their scheme to restore capitalism. In order to prevent the teachers and students from taking part in this fight-to-the-death political struggle against the counter-revolutionary revisionist clique, these revisionists used the old educational framework for their own ends. They said that both studies and the cultural revolution must be carried on simultaneously and tried to keep the teachers and students in the classrooms making criticisms in the purely academic sphere. But almost from the beginning, the masses of the students who were armed with Mao Tse-tung's thought saw through this ruse and refused to fall into the trap. In the proletarian spirit of daring to think, to act, to break through and

make revolution, they rebelled against the old educational system. They smashed the control of the bourgeois intellectuals over the schools, stopped classes and walked out of their classrooms to make revolution.

In a way their education never really stopped for a day, for they entered the much bigger classroom of society, facing the world and braving its storms. The class struggle, with all its sharpness and complexities, became their course of study.

They pointed their spearhead straight at the counter-revolutionary revisionist clique, dragged out the agents which China's Khrushchov had planted in the schools and education departments, and defeated the bourgeois reactionary line which China's Khrushchov had personally formulated in order to suppress the revolutionary masses. They set up their own organizations, the Red Guards, and went out into society to destroy the ideology, culture, customs and habits of the exploiting classes, and to foster the new, the proletarian. They travelled all over the country to exchange revolutionary experience. In their speeches and with the pen they made a notable contribution toward completely demolishing the bourgeois headquarters inside the Party.

In this struggle against the handful of capitalist-roaders in the Party, they learned to put the interest of the people above their own self-interest.

In the past year and a half of the cultural revolution, the masses of the revolutionary teachers and students and Red Guards, closely following the strategic plan formulated by Chairman Mao, have acted as the vanguard in the great proletarian cultural revolution, a movement without precedent in history. As Lenin said, "During a revolution, millions and tens of millions of people learn in a week more than they do in a year of ordinary, somnolent life." By taking direct part in this revolutionary movement and creatively studying and striving hard to apply Chairman Mao's thinking—particularly his theories on class struggle—the teachers and students came to understand the real meaning of classes and class struggle. They gained a deeper and fuller grasp of the theories, line, policies and principles for making revolution and preventing revisionism under the dictatorship of the proletariat. They saw more clearly why it was vital to transform the educational system that trained successors for revisionism.

The imperialists and revisionists spread the slander that there has

been a great "falling off" of the educational level in China. This, however, is really to deceive the people in their own countries, to cover up the corruption in their own education and the panic in their own hearts. It is not at all strange that they should buzz about frantically like trapped flies. Our revolutionary teachers and students will always bear in mind Chairman Mao's teaching: "To be attacked by the enemy is not a bad thing but a good thing."

Classes Resume, Revolution Goes On

By last October decisive victory had been won in the great proletarian cultural revolution, the bourgeois headquarters had been smashed, the handful of capitalist-roaders in the education departments had been overthrown and the revisionist line in education had been subjected to an initial round of mass criticism. Therefore, the Party Central Committee, the State Council, and the Military Commission and Cultural Revolution Group under the Party Central Committee issued a notice to all colleges and universities, secondary and primary schools to resume classes while continuing to carry on the revolution. The notice urged all schools to earnestly carry out Chairman Mao's instruction to "Fight self, repudiate revisionism", and at the same time to carry out reforms, to put into practice Chairman Mao's thinking on revolutionizing education and to step by step work out a new revolutionary school system and curriculum.

Chairman Mao says: "There is no construction without destruction. Destruction means criticism and repudiation; it means revolution. It involves reasoning things out, which is construction. Put destruction first, and in the process you have construction."

In the revolution in education, destruction means that the revisionist line in education and the reactionary bourgeois academic "authorities" must be thoroughly criticized and repudiated, political-

A problem in the transformation of education is discussed by teachers and young revolutionaries at the Shanghai No. 6 Girls' Middle School.

ly, ideologically and theoretically. Construction means the creation of a completely new proletarian educational system worked out according to the principles in Chairman Mao's instruction of May 7.

Repudiating the Revisionist Line

Now classes have been resumed in all schools, and all have daily required study of Chairman Mao's works and quotations. The revolutionary teachers and students are making energetic efforts to revolutionize their own ideology by studying and absorbing Mao Tse-tung's thought and trying to get rid of non-proletarian ideas in their own thinking. It is these people, especially the activists among them, Chairman Mao points out, who are the ones to be relied on for making the revolution and for carrying the great proletarian cultural revolution through to the end.

With Chairman Mao's thinking on education as their weapon, they have conducted revolutionary mass criticism on course material in literature, history, philosophy, economics, industry and agriculture. As the criticism gets deeper it begins to touch on the whole line and system for education and on the thinking of the reactionary bourgeois "authorities" who had controlled them.

The revolutionaries listed in detail the crimes of the bourgeois educational system: education divorced from productive labour, from the working people and from the class struggle in society; the long period of schooling; too many courses; the heavy homework; the overstress on getting good marks; and teaching subject matter rather than teaching people. In this way the 17-year struggle in education between the two classes, two roads and two lines was shown up even more clearly.

In some schools teachers and students followed Chairman Mao's admonition for "intellectuals to go among the masses, to go to factories and villages", and went to live and work with the workers and peasants. They joined them in denouncing and criticizing the revisionist line in education, made investigations and discussed tenta-



Workers at the Tsingtao No. 2 Rubber Plant are eager to give their ideas on the transformation of education to revolutionary students and teachers from the Shantung Institute of Chemical Industry who have come to solicit them.

tive plans with them for revolutionizing education.

Tentative Proposals

One plan for transforming the educational system was put forth in Tungchi University in Shanghai (see story on p. 7), and is now being tested in practice. From other schools came other proposals.

A proposal for reorganization came from the Peking Institute of Forestry. At this institute, education was controlled by the reactionary bourgeois "authorities" through the teaching groups (sometimes referred to as teaching research groups), of which there were several in every department. These had full power over making teaching programmes, compiling and approving teaching materials and texts, deciding on teaching content and methods. The reactionary bourgeois "authorities" turned these groups into important tools for pushing the revisionist line in education and made them a bulwark for resisting Chairman Mao's line in education.

Revolutionary teachers and students at the Forestry Institute have demanded that such teaching groups be abolished and that in each specialization a three-in-one combination of revolutionary teachers, students and cadres lead both the teaching and the struggle-criticism-transformation movement, and in the long run be responsible for both political work and professional work. Such an arrangement was first proposed at

the institute in 1958 but was never tested in practice because China's Khrushchov and his agents resisted and sabotaged it. Now in effect at the Institute of Forestry, this form of organization has shown four advantages:

1. It has shattered the organizational structure which had been designed to enforce the old educational system.
2. It has put an end to control of the teaching groups by the bourgeois professors and academic "authorities," and of the tendency among the teachers to be divorced from the masses and to pay no attention to political and ideological work.
3. It facilitates teaching and study as well as the reform of education. Previously the different teaching groups acted on their own, without consulting one another or coordinating their efforts in teaching. This led to lack of integration between fundamental courses and specialized courses and between specialized courses and practical work done during the period of schooling. Theory was divorced from practice. The new arrangement has remedied this so that all aspects of teaching are related, like links in a chain.
4. The new organization makes it possible to greatly reduce the number of teachers.

Proposals for transforming enrolment of new students, course examinations and promoting stu-



dents from one grade to another were made by an educational reform group at the Peking Teachers' University. Chairman Mao once pointed out: "The present method of examination is like a method for dealing with the enemy. It is a surprise attack, full of catch questions and obscure questions. It is nothing but a test of official stereotyped writing.*"

At Teachers' University it was proposed that such examinations be abolished. Whatever method is used in the future to test the student's progress, the group pointed out, it must put proletarian politics to the fore, be linked with practical work, pay special attention to the student's ability to analyse and solve problems and encourage the student to form his own opinions and judgements. Examinations should not be a test of memory but of reasoning power, and their aim should be to promote learning. This proposal comes out against the mechanical repetition of teaching material. Instead, students should be encouraged to study creatively, to apply what they have learned and to expound their own ideas. There should not be many examinations, and no surprise tests. In some subjects examinations could be done away with altogether. Where examinations are used they can take various forms: the multiple-choice form, where students may choose from a number of questions, the open-book type examination, or the type where the student's understanding of the subject is tested in a practical situation.

* The phrase "official stereotyped writing" refers to a form of essay which served as an imperial examination for scholars. These usually consisted of empty rhetoric written according to a formalistic eight-section pattern.

All of these forms should give full play to the student's ability to reason things out, and students should be allowed to discuss questions together and use reference books, texts or notes.

The Teachers' University educational reform group proposed an end to the system where students who do not pass their courses are forced to repeat the year of work. Instead, schools should put proletarian politics in the forefront, bring the student's own initiative into full play, and heighten the teachers' sense of responsibility, so that all students will pass their courses.

In admitting new students to all schools, a class line should be followed and priority should be given to the children of worker, peasant and soldier families. The former system of entrance examinations should be abolished and instead young people who are good both politically and scholastically should be recommended or selected from among lower school graduates and from among young people working in industry and agriculture and serving in the army. Young people who have studied in spare-time schools of various types should be eligible for middle school or college. There should be no age limits for such students. When new students are admitted they need not be placed in the first-year class if their actual level is already higher.

These tentative proposals have the warm support of Chairman Mao, the Party Central Committee and people throughout the country because they embody Chairman Mao's policy that "education must serve proletarian politics and be combined with productive labour", because they open the doors wide

to the children of workers, peasants and soldiers and are a step towards enabling everyone who receives an education "to develop morally, intellectually and physically and become a worker with both socialist consciousness and culture".

The Transformation

In the newly-resumed classes, the old courses are being subjected to a practical test by revolution-sharpened consciousness. This gives the teachers and students a better understanding of the nature of the courses and places themselves in a better position to criticize and reform them and to create a new curriculum. Chairman Mao says: "If you want knowledge, you must take part in the practice of changing reality. If you want to know the taste of a pear, you must change the pear by eating it yourself." So the revolutionary teachers and students have chosen to make the transformation in the midst of actual practice, summing up their experience and making continual improvements as they go.

The revolution in education is an unprecedented social transformation of vital importance to the overall victory of the great proletarian cultural revolution, to the development of successors to the revolutionary cause of the proletariat and to the whole future of the Communist Party and the state. Working shoulder to shoulder at this task along with the teachers, students and workers in the schools are members of the People's Liberation Army who have been giving military and political training in the schools, revolutionary cadres and people from the worker and peasant masses. All are contributing their part to this movement for the realization of Chairman Mao's thinking and policy in education and for the complete destruction of the old educational system and the creation of the first new completely proletarian educational system in the history of mankind.

Wang Hsiu-ping, a second-year junior middle school student at the Taochangti Middle School in Peking, takes the class in physics, a bold experiment in which teachers and students teach and learn from each other.

