

While their [the students'] main task is to study, they should in addition to their studies, learn other things, that is, industrial work, farming and military affairs. They should also criticize the bourgeoisie. The period of schooling should be shortened, education should be revolutionized, and the domination of our schools by bourgeois intellectuals should by no means be allowed to continue.

— MAO TSE-TUNG

May 7, 1966

Some Tentative Programmes for Revolutionizing Education

The call issued by Chairman Mao and the Central Committee of the Party for all colleges, middle schools and primary schools to resume classes while carrying on the revolution has received warm response from the revolutionary masses, revolutionary Red Guards and revolutionary teachers and students throughout the country.

On November 3, "Renmin Ribao" published the following tentative proposals worked out by Tongji University in Shanghai and two other higher educational institutions to revolutionize education. The paper's accompanying editor's note called for widespread discussion of these proposals in order to "advance the revolution in education."

"These programmes," noted the paper, "still need to be tested in revolutionary practice."

"Chairman Mao recently gave us this advice: '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.' We hope that revolutionary cadres and the revolutionary masses throughout the country will resolutely implement this instruction and strive for great victories in the proletarian educational revolution." — P.R. Editor.

Tongji University's Proposals For Transforming Education

In accordance with Chairman Mao's May 7, 1966 instruction, Shanghai's Tongji University sent more than 100 people in groups to factories and construction sites in August and September this year to make in-

vestigations and study the question of transforming education. Bold proposals have been worked out for the reorganization of the university.

It is proposed to transform Tongji University into the "May 7th" Commune consisting of a tutorial unit, a designing unit and a building unit, an integrated whole having three-fold function of tuition, designing and building. This will change the present phenomenon of education being divorced from production.

The "May 7th" Commune will abolish existing departments and teaching research groups and set up in their place a number of specialized committees each composed of personnel from the tutorial unit, the designing unit and the production unit. Each committee will have a number of classes under its direction with teachers, students, workers, engineering and technical personnel organized along military lines.

The commune will implement two types of "three-in-one" combination: one is the "three-in-one" combination of revolutionary leading cadres, and leaders of the revolutionary mass organizations and the militia; the other is the combination of tuition, designing and building.

The commune will operate a rotation system whereby a part of its teaching staff will be enabled to be tempered and remoulded by practical participation in production at fixed intervals.

The "May 7th" Commune will set up political work departments in its organizations at all levels. Every specialized committee will be provided with political instructors and each class with political workers.

The period of schooling will be shortened to three years. Apart from courses in Mao Tse-tung's thought and military affairs, the time allocated to specialized

theoretical subjects will be proportionally increased each year. All students in each academic year will be required to take part in productive labour. In the first year, half the time will be assigned to building and engineering work. In the second year, two-thirds of the time will be used for learning the basic knowledge about designing through practical work under the guidance of technical workers or teachers. In the third year, stress will be put on the study of specialized courses while the student continues to spend part of his time in productive labour.

In the course of keen debates on the programme, the revolutionary teachers and students of Tongji University have come to see that the "May 7th" Commune project is a concrete way for engineering institutes to implement Chairman Mao's May 7th instruction. They list its following merits:

(1) Leadership of the university is placed firmly in the hands of the proletarian revolutionaries and the institute will not be dominated, as it was formerly, by bourgeois intellectuals.

(2) Chairman Mao's policy of combining education with productive labour will be carried out. This will enrich the content of teaching and study, and promote the development of the struggle for production and scientific experiment.

(3) Since the content of teaching and study is linked with actual construction projects, it can be streamlined and concentrated, and so end overlapping in the curriculum, and keep it from being overly academic and overburdened with superfluous material.

(4) It is conducive to the ideological remoulding of intellectuals and to the elimination of the differences between town and country, between the worker and the peasant, and between mental and manual labour.

The Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee attaches great importance to this programme. It has assigned some staff workers to work together with teachers and students of the university on the programme. It plans to send 150 teachers, students and staff workers of Tongji University along with members of the East China Institute of Industrial Design to try the programme out at a construction site.

Proposals From the Peking Forestry Institute

Since formally resuming studies on October 23, the revolutionary teachers and students of the Peking Forestry Institute have put daring above all and advanced bold proposals for transforming education in their institute. They have abolished teaching research groups in all its departments and formed "three-in-one" specialized companies based on specialized branches of study. In this way they have brought together teachers of the foundation courses and those of the specialized courses. Formerly, problems relating to teaching and study were studied on the basis of the tutorial needs of each class. Now they are studied on the basis of

specialized branches of study. The 17 teaching research groups under the former Department of Forestry have been reorganized into four specialized companies—forestry, forest protection, forest economics and water and soil conservation. The seven teaching research groups of the former Department of Forest Industry have now been reorganized into three specialized companies—forest machinery, wood working and forest chemistry. In order to strengthen collective leadership, each company has established a "three-in-one" leading body consisting of revolutionary cadres, revolutionary teachers and young revolutionary students. This leading body assumes leadership over the work of struggle-criticism-transformation and also over teaching. It is responsible for both political work and vocational studies. These specialized companies have shown their advantage in the following four ways:

1. They have shattered the set-up designed to implement the old educational system.

2. They have put an end to the former tendency whereby teaching research groups were controlled by bourgeois professors and academic authorities and the teachers were isolated from the students and paid little attention to political and ideological work.

3. Teaching research based on specialized studies facilitates the reform of education as well as teaching and study. Now that classes have been resumed, the different companies will see to it that the foundation courses are integrated with the specialized courses and that specialized studies are integrated with practical work so that all aspects of teaching are closely linked together like a chain. This method is helping to change the situation in which the different teaching research groups all acted on their own without consulting one another and without co-ordinating their efforts in teaching, and in which theory was divorced from practice.

4. Reorganization of the teaching research groups and tuition on the basis of specialized company makes it possible to greatly reduce the number of teachers.

Proposals From the Peking Teachers' University on Examinations and Other Questions

One. On Examinations

Chairman Mao once pointed out: "Examinations at present are like tackling enemies. They are surprise attacks, full of catch questions and obscure questions. They are nothing but a method of testing official stereotyped writing."* This established examination

*Official stereotyped writing refers to an essay form with a set pattern of eight sections. Mostly empty rhetoric, it was a set piece in the imperial examinations for scholars. Introduced in the 15th century and designed to shackle the thinking of intellectuals, its basic form remained unchanged till late in the 19th century.

method must be abolished. New examination methods must be so designed that they put proletarian politics to the fore, are linked with practical work, pay special attention to a student's ability to analyse and solve problems, and encourage students to form their own ideas and judgment of things.

Examinations are aimed to promote study. They should not be a test of memory but of the power of reasoning. Mechanical repetition of teaching material should be opposed. Students should be encouraged to study creatively, to apply what they have learnt and to expound their own ideas. There should not be too many examinations and an end should be put to surprise tests. Examinations may be done away with altogether in some subjects. Examinations can take various forms: Students may be given a choice of questions to answer; they may be allowed the use of textbooks, notes and reference material during examinations; or they may be examined while engaged in some practical work. Examinations should be so designed as to give full play to the student's ability to reason things out. They should be allowed to discuss the questions together and use reference books.

Two. Promotion to a Higher Class or Leaving a Student to Spend a Second Year in the Same Class

There should be a stop to the practice of leaving a student to spend another year in the same class if he fails the examinations. Schools should put proletarian politics to the fore and bring into full play the students' initiative in study. The teachers' sense of responsibility should be strengthened.

Three. Going Up the Educational Ladder

The class line should be carried out in admitting new students. Schools should open their gates wide to the children of workers, peasants and soldiers.

The former system of entrance examinations should be abolished. A method combining recommendation and selection should be used in admitting new students. Young people who are good both politically and scholastically should be selected from among the graduating students and from among the workers, peasants and soldiers for admittance to schools of a higher grade.

Young people should be allowed to go to middle schools or colleges for advanced study after studying in spare-time schools of different levels and types.

New students may be admitted to classes other than the first-year class. No age limits should be placed on such students.