

TEXT 34

FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO LINES IN EDUCATION

On February 14, *Renmin Ribao* frontpaged an article written by the Party committee of Chaoyang Agricultural College in northeast China's Liaoning Province. The article discusses the fundamental differences between the two lines in education, warmly praises Chairman Mao's policy on education and criticizes the revisionist educational system.

This is one of the many important articles that have appeared recently in the Chinese press counterattacking the Right deviationist trend in educational, scientific and technical circles which tries to negate the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

Since last summer, the Right deviationists in educational circles have spread absurdities in an attempt to blur the distinction between the two lines in education and reverse the verdict on the revisionist line in education which has been criticized during the Great Cultural Revolution. The Right deviationist trend has met with prompt and powerful rebuttal by the people throughout the country.

There has been an acute struggle between the proletarian line and the revisionist line on the educational front since the founding of New China. The current mass revolutionary debate is a continuation and deepening of this struggle.

The article by the Party committee of Chaoyang Agricultural College says: Our college was founded and expanded during the Cultural Revolution. Our experience over the years can be summed up as follows: Firmly carry out Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line, fight tit-for-tat against the revisionist line that dominated education during the 17 years preceding the Cultural Revolution, and strive to make our college an instrument of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

However, the Right deviationists in educational circles asserted that the formulation "fighting tit-for-tat against the revisionist line in education of the 17 years" is wrong. They tried to blur the essential differences between the old line and the new in education. Since this is a cardinal issue of right and wrong concerning the line, the question must be thrashed out.

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1. Old Agricultural Colleges Were Dominated by Bourgeois Intellectuals; New Agricultural Colleges Must Strengthen Working-Class Leadership

Owing to the lack of a powerful contingent of proletarian intellectuals during the 17 years before the Cultural Revolution, the schools were dominated by bourgeois intellectuals whose influence went far beyond numerical superiority. Because the question of leadership in the educational field was not fundamentally solved and the important theoretical question of all-round dictatorship by the proletariat over the bourgeoisie in the superstructure was not clarified, the result was that some of the people sent by the Party and the working class to the schools were either edged out or turned into mouthpieces of the bourgeoisie. This enabled the bourgeoisie to exercise dictatorship over the proletariat in the schools.

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution initiated and led by Chairman Mao smashed the rule of Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary revisionist line in education. In 1968 Chairman Mao issued the instruction: **"The working class must exercise leadership in everything."** The working class and its most reliable ally, the poor and lower-middle peasants, along with People's Liberation Army fighters, moved into the schools to break the monopoly of bourgeois intellectuals and establish working-class leadership in the educational field, thereby opening a new chapter in the history of proletarian education.

The workers' and armymen's Mao Tsetung Thought propaganda teams in our college broke through strong resistance and guided the teachers and students to move from the city to the countryside. This was done in accordance with the directive issued by our great leader Chairman Mao more than a decade ago that all agricultural colleges should move to the rural areas. Running our school in the midst of the poor and lower-middle peasants, we have thus placed it under their direct management. A new-type socialist agricultural college has come into being with the educational system and the principles and methods of teaching completely overhauled.

Staunch working-class leadership and direct participation in management by workers and peasants are basic guarantees for carrying out Chairman Mao's proletarian line in education. But some people in educational circles prate absurdities, alleging that workers know nothing about education and so it "must be placed under the leadership of non-professionals who are enthusiastic about science." In other words, they want to eliminate working-class leadership and restore the domination of the revisionist line in the schools. Practice has shown that the working class is well versed in transforming the old educational

system in the image of the proletariat, and only the working class is capable of carrying the proletarian revolution in education through to the end. Attacks on working-class leadership in the schools are, in effect, directed at the dictatorship of the proletariat and amount to betrayal of the proletariat and capitulation to the bourgeoisie.

2. Old Agricultural Colleges Were Concentrated in Cities; New Agricultural Colleges Are Scattered in the Countryside

Before the Cultural Revolution, all agricultural colleges were located in urban areas and did little to serve the socialist revolution and construction in the rural areas. The poor and lower-middle peasants were furious about this. They said: "It's better not to have any such agricultural colleges at all."

Led by the workers' propaganda team, a number of teachers and students of the then Shenyang Agricultural College left the city in 1970 and set up a socialist agricultural college in the mountainous Chaoyang Prefecture. The local peasants welcomed them with open arms.

Once settled in the rural area, the teachers and students took part enthusiastically in the movement to learn from Tachai in agriculture. They ran evening courses in the production teams to disseminate Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. They formed scientific experimental groups and joined the peasants in improving soil and farming scientifically so that grain output in their host production brigades increased considerably that same year. The teachers and students also helped the production teams with orchard management, pruning the trees and spraying pesticides. The apple crop doubled that year. In the meantime, the students deepened their specialized knowledge.

Moving an agricultural college from the urban area to the countryside is not merely a move in location. It involves such questions as whom should they serve, what road they should take and the line they should follow. If an agricultural college is isolated from the rural areas, it cannot be of any help to the learn-from-Tachai movement, nor can it train workers with both socialist consciousness and culture.

3. Old Agricultural Colleges Advocated "He Who Excels in Learning Can Be an Official"; New Agricultural Colleges Practise the System of "From the Communes and Back to the Communes" and Train New-Type Peasants With Both Socialist Consciousness and Culture

The Confucian concept that "he who excels in learning can be an official" has been the guiding principle of all exploiting classes in running

schools. Aiming at training so-called “red agronomists” and “top specialists in construction,” the old agricultural colleges actually were revisionist dyeing-vats and hotbeds for bringing up bourgeois intellectual aristocrats. It is imperative for our new college to break thoroughly with the old educational traditions in order to train workers with both socialist consciousness and culture.

Chairman Mao issued the directive on July 21, 1968: **“Students should be selected from among workers and peasants with practical experience, and they should return to production after a few years’ study.”** This is a powerful ideological weapon to destroy thoroughly the reactionary feudal, bourgeois and revisionist traditions in education. We have implemented this brilliant instruction of Chairman Mao’s by carrying out the system of “from the communes and back to the communes,” which means students come from people’s communes and, after graduation, return to the communes to work as peasants.

Over 340 three-year-course students, enrolled under the system of “from the communes and back to the communes,” have graduated from our college since 1971. They have become new-type peasants. They have broken with the age-old tradition of “studying to become officials” and carried out the principle of the Paris Commune that **“careerism be fought not merely in words, but in deeds.”** Working vigorously in the forefront of the three great revolutionary movements of class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experiment, they have made contributions in the learn-from-Tachai movement. The poor and lower-middle peasants praise them as “vanguards in restricting bourgeois right” and “new-type socialist-minded peasants.”

The system of “from the communes and back to the communes” is an important indication that the schools have become instruments of the dictatorship of the proletariat instead of the bourgeois dictatorship. Since it came into being, this system has been strongly opposed by the bourgeoisie and the old force of habit. To train workers and peasants, according to them, there is no need to run colleges, and those who have received a college education should not be workers and peasants. Does this not mean that the difference between mental and manual labour and the monopoly of culture and science by the privileged few should be perpetuated? We should always bear in mind how the Soviet Union has been turned into a revisionist country. In the Soviet Union, many sons and daughters of the workers and peasants managed to climb up to leading positions after finishing college, but they have betrayed the proletariat and become revisionists.

4. Old Agricultural Colleges Stressed “Giving First Place To Intellectual Development”; New Agricultural Colleges Stress Putting Proletarian Politics in Command

The old agricultural colleges followed the bourgeois principle of “giving first place to intellectual development” through stress on specialization, thereby making the schools tools of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

To thoroughly change this serious situation, we have in our practice maintained that socialist agricultural colleges, like other institutions of higher learning, must be made instruments of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Our students must first of all be trained to understand class struggle and the struggle between the two lines and become fighters who dare to criticize revisionism and capitalism and who strive to build socialism and consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat. Only in this way will the scientific and technical knowledge acquired by the students be of real use.

We have strengthened our efforts in ideological and political education in the past several years in accordance with Chairman Mao’s teaching: **“In all its work the school should aim at transforming the student’s ideology.”** The study of works by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin and Chairman Mao’s works is a required course, and learning from Tachai in agriculture and participation in productive labour are basic courses. The students take part in all political movements and return to their respective communes and production brigades regularly to take part in the three great revolutionary movements. There is ideological education throughout their period of study to strengthen the students’ determination to make revolution in the rural areas all their lives. And after their graduation, the college continues to pay attention to the students’ political maturing and helps them raise their vocational skill.

5. Old Agricultural Colleges Advocated “Regularization”; New Agricultural Colleges Adhere to Part-Work, Part-Study System

Agricultural colleges before the Cultural Revolution followed a “regular” system that shut the students within the four walls of the classroom and divorced education from productive labour, mental from manual labour and theory from practice. Our new agricultural college upholds the Party’s educational policy of combining education with productive labour, mental with manual labour and theory with practice, and puts into practice the system requiring the students to “do

part-time work and part-time study, working while studying.”

We have over the years included productive labour in the curriculum. Students do part-time work and part-time study while teachers do part-time work and part-time teaching, so that manual labour has gradually become the basis of school life. The teachers and students rely on their own efforts and work hard to put up school buildings and open up land for cultivation. Since 1972, they have put up 120 rooms and reclaimed 66 hectares of land. They harvested 30 tons of grain in 1972 and 150 tons in 1975, striving gradually to achieve self-sufficiency in grain, vegetables, edible oil and meat. In this way, the students have not only created wealth for the state but also learnt how to build new socialist villages. Only by persistently taking part in productive labour can worker-peasant-soldier students retain the fine qualities of the labouring people.

As society develops, the historical phenomenon of education divorced from productive labour, mental from manual labour, and theory from practice will eventually disappear with the elimination of classes. Marx, Lenin and Chairman Mao have all given incisive explanations regarding the significance of combining education with productive labour. As early as 1847, Marx and Engels advocated **“combination of education with industrial production.”** In 1919 Lenin called for **“the closest connection between schooling and productive social labour of the child.”** Our great leader Chairman Mao, in formulating an educational policy for us, said: **“Education must serve proletarian politics and be combined with productive labour. Working people should master intellectual work and intellectuals should integrate themselves with the working people.”** These directives of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Chairman Mao, however, were ignored before the Cultural Revolution by the old schools which trumpeted: “Those who work with their minds govern, those who work with their hands are governed.” The old schools opposed students’ participation in productive labour and encouraged the isolation of students from the workers and peasants, thus widening the differences between mental and manual labour and extending the scope of bourgeois right.

**6. Old Agricultural Colleges Advocated “Three Centres” and “Three Conventional Stages”;
New Agricultural Colleges Set Up “Three-in-One” System**

To train intellectual aristocrats of the bourgeoisie, the old agricultural colleges stressed a teaching process “centered around teachers, books and classrooms” and based on the “three conventional stages—basic theory, basic principles of various specialties, and

specialized courses.” To bring up a new generation of peasants with socialist consciousness and culture, our new agricultural college must integrate teaching, scientific research and production.

The great teacher Lenin pointed out: **“An ideal future society cannot be conceived without the combination of education with the productive labour of the younger generation: neither training and education without productive labour, nor productive labour without parallel training and education could be raised to the degree required by the present level of technology and the state of scientific knowledge.”**

We have in the past few years tried out a new system of conducting teaching on the basis of scientific research and production in the departments of agronomy, forestry and animal husbandry. For example, the agronomy department organizes the students immediately after their enrollment into eight groups, each specializing in sorghum, cultivation, plant protection, soil and fertilizer or some other subjects. Subjects for scientific research are determined according to the needs of production and the content of teaching is decided on in accordance with the requirements of production and scientific research. Under this system, the students have become more lively and show greater enthusiasm and initiative in study. In this way, they are able to acquire solid knowledge and raise the ability to analyse and solve problems, thus enriching and developing science.

7. Old Agricultural Colleges Were Housed in Buildings And Isolated From Society; New Agricultural Colleges Are Closely Linked With the Three Great Revolutionary Movements

The old agricultural colleges were estranged from proletarian politics, from the workers and peasants and from productive labour. As a result, the longer the student studied, the more stupid he became. Concerning this old educational system, Chairman Mao pointed out that it would take a student 16 or 17 years to advance from primary school through college, and for over 20 years he had no chance to see how rice, sorghum, legumes, wheat, millet and panicked millet were grown or how workers worked, how peasants tilled the land and how commodities were exchanged. Moreover, his health was ruined. It really did a lot of harm.

In order to end this situation in which abilities were stunted and damage done to the young people, our college adopted the training system of “goings-up, goings-down.” “Going-up” means that the students engage in certain activities in the college or at research and teaching centres. “Going-down” means that the students return to the communes and production brigades and teams to take part in the three

great revolutionary movements. The duration and frequency of the students' field training in their own production brigades or teams vary with their specialities and length of study.

Experience in the last few years shows that this method is a revolution in the teaching system. Its salient feature is that the concept of wholehearted reliance on the workers and poor and lower-middle peasants in running schools runs through the whole educational process. Students remain commune members and maintain close contacts with the poor and lower-middle peasants at all times. This enables the students to understand clearly the aim of their study—"going-up" for the sake of "going-down." The students bring the problems in production of their own communes or production brigades to the college for study and return promptly to apply what they have learnt to production. This promotes the constant improvement of teaching material and methods and enables the students to contribute their share to the learn-from-Tachai movement.

8. Old Agricultural Colleges Were "Pagodas" for Privileged Few; New Agricultural Colleges Spread Out on Ever-Widening Scale, Reaching to Grass Roots and Providing Education for Masses

Schools before the Cultural Revolution discriminated against the children of workers and peasants and created an intellectual elite tapering off at the top like a pagoda. This was a continuation of the cultural autocracy over the people by the landlord and capitalist classes.

Since the start of the Cultural Revolution, guided by Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, our college has made great efforts to change this situation and provided the masses with more and more opportunities to study. Our college first set up six research and teaching centres in six counties of the prefecture. These centres were later incorporated with county-run agricultural colleges. Thus agricultural colleges were set up at both the prefecture and county levels. Communes run agricultural middle schools and brigades organize teams for scientific experiments. A network of agricultural science and education is thus formed embracing the entire prefecture. Our college works in close co-operation with schools run by counties and communes to enable this network to perform good work. Beginning in 1973, our college established seven additional research and teaching centres in the counties. The aim is to run the schools near the poor and lower-middle peasants' homes for their convenience and make maximum efforts to meet the needs of Chaoyang Prefecture. The poor and lower-middle peasants in the prefecture are both our teachers and the recipients of our service. In the past few years, our college has trained 16,000 ac-

tivists in the learn-from-Tachai movement through forming scientific experimental teams, running spare-time peasant schools and short-term training courses and organizing mobile classes, thereby contributing to building Tachai-type counties in the prefecture.

9. Old Agricultural Colleges Enslaved Students; New Agricultural Colleges Enable Worker-Peasant-Soldier Students To “Attend the University, Manage It and Transform It”

In the old schools, the students were led to bury themselves in books and ignore affairs of the state. The old examination system treated the students as if they were enemies and the absolute authority of the teachers was upheld, while the students must obey and be subservient without the slightest hesitation.

Now the worker-peasant-soldier students are the new force in the educational revolution. They attend colleges, manage them and transform them with Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought.

To help them fully play their role in “attending, managing and transforming” colleges, we have set up special groups for this purpose at all levels in our college. The leaders of these groups are in the leading bodies of the Party organizations at the corresponding levels. This ensures organizationally that the worker-peasant-soldier students discharge their duties to the best of their ability.

Under the leadership of the college Party committee, the worker-peasant-soldier students always hit back at erroneous trends of thought and defend Chairman Mao’s revolutionary line in education with a firm, clear-cut class stand in the struggle to build a socialist agricultural college. They courageously break with the traditional ideas of all exploiting classes and are determined to become a new generation with socialist consciousness and culture. They share the tasks of teaching, scientific research and production together with the teachers and act as masters of the college in all respects.

Our experience over the past few years shows that with the worker-peasant-soldier students as the rising force in educational revolution, working-class leadership in education is consolidated and strengthened.

10. Teachers in Old Agricultural Colleges Were Divorced From Workers and Peasants; New Agricultural Colleges Help Teachers Integrate With Workers and Peasants and Strive To Build a Contingent of Proletarian Teachers

Chairman Mao has pointed out: “**In the problem of transforming education it is the teachers who are the main problem.**” The old agricultural colleges barred workers and peasants from the lecture plat-

form. As for the vast majority of the teachers whose world outlook was by and large bourgeois, the colleges did not guide them to integrate with the workers and peasants and thoroughly remould their world outlook. Such teachers could only train bourgeois intellectual aristocrats and not successors to the revolutionary cause of the proletariat. In order to transform our college into an instrument of the dictatorship of the proletariat, we must train a contingent of proletarian teachers.

Over the past few years, our college has organized the students to go to advanced people's communes and production brigades and army units so that they can learn from the workers, peasants and soldiers. Our college has also invited a number of workers and poor and lower-middle peasants to give lectures as full-time or part-time teachers, and we have selected new-type peasant-teachers from among our graduates who receive their pay in work points. This has enabled more and more poor and lower-middle peasants to take a direct part in the educational revolution, so that the proletariat gradually has a superior force in this field. The worker-peasant teachers have profound proletarian feelings and their lectures are delivered in vivid, popular language. In line with the Party's policy of uniting with, educating and remoulding intellectuals, our college guides and encourages the veteran teachers to take the road of integration with the workers and peasants, and this has stimulated their enthusiasm for socialism.

In the past, many teachers worked hard behind piles of books for fame and gain and ignored agricultural production. Now they think what the poor and lower-middle peasants think and do their best to contribute to the three great revolutionary movements. Veteran professor Kung Chi-tao has gained renewed energy in the course of integrating with the poor and lower-middle peasants. Once in helping the poor and lower-middle peasants develop a new strain of sorghum, he walked 20 kilometres of mountain roads to get back to his experimental centre. The professor remarked that he had taken a wrong path before. Now, under the guidance of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, he would try to do more for the people in his later years.

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The article says in conclusion: Our achievements in the educational revolution in the last six years have been won under the guidance of Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line in education and by fighting a tit-for-tat struggle against the revisionist line in education. The slogan "Fighting tit-for-tat against the revisionist line in education of the 17 years" demonstrates the determination of the revolutionary teachers and students to break thoroughly with the old educational system. We will adhere to Chairman Mao's revolutionary line and carry the proletarian revolution in education through to the end.