

## Educational Reform in the People's Republic of China

—Background and Prospects—

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The unification of theory and practice is the basic aim of education in China. In higher education, attention is especially paid to linking education with productive labor, in attempting to overcome a "threefold separation" in education: separation (a) from the proletarian government, (b) from the laboring masses, and (c) from productive works; and carrying out Mao Tse-tung's directive: "Education should always serve the proletarian government and should always be connected with productive labor." To do this, all colleges with science departments have factories on campus or else are associated with factories. Of course this does not mean the use of students merely as a labor source; the linking of colleges and factories is used for the reeducation of teachers and students in political ideology, theory, and practical technicalities. At the same time, it makes it easier to recruit teachers from among laborers, peasants and soldiers for purposes of education and to tie them to the execution of social revolution.

This orientation can be found in primary and middle schools as well. For example, a teacher whose school has a factory producing wooden desks and chairs says, "Our children manufacture, with their own hands, desks and other wooden items, a part of which is sold in the market. This is in accordance with the ideal of self-help. Moreover, the ultimate purpose of these children's activities, i. e., making wooden furniture or raising vegetables on farms, lies in enabling them to approach and understand the thoughts and feelings of laborers and peasants by means of having them participate from their early childhood in the actual labor."

The contents of the present thesis are threefold: First, a general

survey of the educational thought and practice during the period from the great educational leap of 1958 to the great cultural revolution of the proletariat in 1966. Second, concrete examples of the educational reform currently going on. By giving some idea of these two aspects, the basic spirit of the above-mentioned educational reform may be grasped. Third and last, insight into the position the educational reform currently going on in China will occupy in the future history of education.