Our School On The Road To Its Further Revolutionisation

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In the People's Republic of Albania a real revolution has been carried out in the field of education and the school during the years of the people's power. The education policy of the Party has aimed at making education the property of the broad masses of the people in order to equip them with sound knowledge and culture and build a socialist school as a center of the communist and revolutionary education of the rising generation and of all the working people. These aims, once considered as distant objectives, have become concrete reality in our country today.

THE PRESENT AND THE HERITAGE OF THE PAST

Our country inherited great backwardness in the field of education and culture from the antifeudal regimes of the past. This situation faced us with a twofold task – the revolution in the field of education and culture had to be carried out simultaneously in breadth and depth, solving one after the other, the complicated tasks of the creation of the complete educational system ranging from the elementary school to the higher school, and giving it a mass character as well as of transforming the school from a feudal-bourgeois school into a truly socialist school. The solution of the quantitative and qualitative problems of the revolution in the field of the school and education, in close connection with one another, constitutes its specific character which has left its mark on all the stages of the development of this revolution.

The revolution in the field of education and the school has been a living dialectical process characterized by continuous advance by overcoming the various difficulties and contradictions that have arisen, as well as by the elimination of the problems of growth. The great transformations achieved in the field of education and the school in our country are a great historic victory of the party and the people's state power. The liquidation of illiteracy, the compulsory primary education since the early years of the liberation of the Fatherland, the complete realization of the compulsory 8-year schooling and its extension to the most remote areas of our country, the rapid extension of secondary schooling, the organization of the system of part time schooling for people who continue in their jobs, the organization for the first time in our country of higher education and, in particular, the creation of the State University of Tirana, etc., constitute the highlights of the vigorous development in breadth of our people's education. On this basis, within the 20-year period (1946-1955), that is, the period beginning with the education reform which laid the foundations of the development of the people's education, and ending with the historic 5th Congress of the PLA, our country has been transformed from a country with 80-85 per cent of its population illiterate and with the network of elementary schools, very limited, both in town and countryside, into a country where illiteracy has been completely wiped out and where education and culture are thriving.

At present one out of every three persons in Albania studies, attends one of the many forms of the school system extended to all over the country.

In all its stages, the development of our school and education system has kept abreast of the general economic-social development of the country on the road of socialist construction. And this is only natural, because the development of the institutions of the superstructure of society is dependent on and a result of the changes and development of the base, i.e. of production. Therefore, the building of the socialist system of education and of the socialist school is a result of the profound changes in the structure of our society and of the struggle for the building of socialism. In this way all the efforts made and the results achieved in our country in the field of education and the school have always been aimed at having them serve the policy of the party and its struggle for the building of socialist society, for the education of the new man, in the best possible way. It is for this reason that at every important
stage of the struggle for the building of socialist society, our school and people’s education system have been faced with new ideological, scientific, pedagogical, organisational, methodical and didactic tasks and obligations, so that it could play its role better as a center of communist education of the younger generation and of equipping it with sound cultural and scientific knowledge.

DEEPENING OF THE IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE

With the 5th Congress of the Party, held in 1966, our country entered a new stage of the struggle for the building of socialist society. The results achieved until then in this direction and the new tasks of its perspective development faced the party and the entire people with solving great problems. These required a higher level of training – ideological and political, educational and cultural, technical and scientific, organisational and administrative, financial and economic. Our whole society, and in the first place, our working class, was faced with the task of raising the struggle for socialism to a higher level through the development of the class struggle, especially on the ideological front, against bourgeois and revisionist ideology and the hang-overs of religious and patriarchal ideology, through the further development of production on the basis of modern equipment and technology and through the revolutionisation of the method and style of work against the manifestations of bureaucracy in the whole activity of the state and economic organs.

This was a turning-point in the whole life of our country, which was characterized by the deepening of the ideological struggle, in the first place, for the formation of the new man with a Marxist-Leninist scientific world outlook and revolutionary features, and for the complete triumph of socialist ideology in the entire life of the country, in frontal struggle against the ideological baggage of the old feudo-bourgeois society and the pressure of bourgeoisie and revisionist ideology. On this sound basis the struggle would be carried out also on the other fronts of the socialist construction, for victory in all fields depended on the revolutionisation of the concepts of man and on strengthening their socialist consciousness. It can be readily understood that under these new conditions, new and very important tasks, were arising for our education and school system, so that it could make another forward stride in conformity with all these requirements which the development itself was putting forward at the present stage.

Taking into consideration the great results which had been achieved in the field of the school and education, and the new tasks for the country’s future economic-social development, the 5th Congress of the Party drew up the general balance-sheet of the struggle for the building of socialism in Albania, and on the basis of the new conditions for further development, scientifically defined the great tasks which our school had to face up to in order to place itself completely at the service of the construction of socialist society. On the basis of the historic decisions of the 5th Congress and comrade Enver Hoxha’s teachings on socialist education and the school, which found their most complete and profound expression in the speech he delivered on March 7, 1968, concerning the further revolutionisation of the school, the ideopolitical and pedagogical-scientific platform for the further development of our education and school system on socialist lines was drafted. After a broad popular debate this platform was finally approved by the 8th Plenum of the Central Committee of the PLA, in June, 1969.

The fundamental idea of the further revolutionisation of our school rests on the fact that, under the present conditions of the development of our revolution it should make a decisive contribution to the training and education of the new man with an all-round communist formation, that is, moulded with the Marxist-Leninist scientific world outlook, with deeply implanted communist convictions and morality, willing to devote all his strengths and abilities to the great cause of the revolution and socialism, armed with the necessary scientific and cultural knowledge to become a capable builder of socialism well trained, physically and militarily for the defence of the Fatherland and socialism, with sound Marxist-Leninist education and aesthetic taste, and bound, like flesh to bone, with the working class and the broad masses of the people.

By working in this revolutionary spirit, our school will play a role of first rate importance in the training of the new people’s intelligentsia, loyal to the end to the great cause of the people and socialism. Our school, therefore, will be one of the main and powerful weapons in the hands of the Party and the working class on the front of the ideological struggle, for the triumph of Marxism-Leninism in the whole life and activity of our society, and to fight till the complete eradication of any hang-overs and influences of alien, anti-socialist and anti-proletarian ideology. At the same time it will be a major contribution to the struggle for the economic and cultural construction of our country, by raising the educational and cultural standards of the masses and their technical and professional training to a higher level so as to advance production in all the branches of our economy.

This task facing our school at the present stage of the development of our country on the road of the complete construction of socialist society, is as important as it is difficult and complex to carry out in practice. It embodied, in a concentrated form, the profound revolutionary Marxist-Leninist content of the teaching educative process of our school and its method. Therefore, its implementation in the whole life of the school, required, first of all, along with a profound understanding of its ideological and pedagogical-scientific objectives, the determination of the concrete roads to be followed in order to attain the purpose. The 8th Plenum of the CC of the PLA in its platform for the further revolutionisation of our school defined these roads in a scientific way, summing up the revolutionary experience of our school and bearing in mind the classical teachings of Marxism-Leninism about the socialist school.

SCHOOL AND LIFE

The practice of life teaches us that in order to succeed in inculcating the Marxist-Leninist world outlook and revolutionary communist in the younger generation, our school must give absolute priority, in its whole teaching and educative activity, to the Marxist-Leninist ideological axis, to the teaching of Marxism-Leninism, to the
all-round Marxist-Leninist ideological and political formation and education of the youth and all the working people attending school, arming them with Marxist-Leninist theory, with the philosophy of dialectical and historical materialism, with the ideology and policy of our Party. The Marxist-Leninist ideological axis must run like a red thread right through the entire life of the school, through all its links and means of work, through all its teaching materials, programs, text-books, methods of teaching and education, through all its internal life and management. On the other hand, in order to fully attain the main objective of its teaching-educative work, our school must base the whole of its teaching and educative work on the triangle: lessons-productive work-physical and military training, in the center of which must be the Marxist-Leninist ideological axis of our Party. The integration of lessons with productive work and physical and military training, is a great principle on which the whole teaching and educative work of our socialist school is based, for only on this basis can we ensure sound ideological training, revolutionary tempering, the necessary cultural and scientific equipment and the sound physical and military training of the rising generation as active builders of socialism and resolute defenders of the gains of the revolution. Likewise the socialist school should be an important center for training people in a sound general education and cultural, scientific and polytechnical way, in as much as the formation of the man of socialist society must be based on a broad cultural development, on the sound mastering of scientific and technical knowledge, in close connection with work for their application in practice. Finally, the entire teaching and educative life of the school must be guided by the socialist principles of education and the scientific teaching method which permits the development of initiative in all directions, of the creative work, independent action and close cooperation of the teachers with the pupils and with society as a whole.

All these directions or concrete ways of carrying out in practice the important directives of the 8th Plenum of the CC of the PLA and the measures adopted to give a greater mass character to our educational system, to give to the broad working masses the possibility to attend, all the categories of schools, without any restrictions, going through full time courses or attending them while continuing with their jobs, constitute a concrete programme for our school, the realisation of which will raise its whole work to a higher level and will place it completely in the service of socialist society. For more than two years, our school has been engaged in an all-round ideopolitical, pedagogical-scientific and organisational-methodic struggle, for the through-going implementation of these orientations and great revolutionary tasks. Facts show that these principles on which our school has been built are the sound foundation of the revolutionary socialist school which struggles for the formation of the new man with a Marxist-Leninist world outlook and with communist features. The historic experience of our school proves that only such a school, which constructs its teaching and educative work on the basis of the revolutionary triangle lessons-productive work-physical and military training, and which makes the Marxist-Leninist science the foundation of this work, is in position to cope successfully with the requirements of socialist society whether they be political, ideological, scientific, pedagogical, etc., and becomes an insurmountable barricade against bourgeois and revisionist ideology and degeneration. It is precisely such a school that socialist society needs and we are creating it.

A CENTER OF REVOLUTIONARY EDUCATION

Our new school has always taken a revolutionary stand and has educated the younger generation with a healthy spirit. But, due to many objective and subjective reasons, it was unable to solve all the problems of its quantitative development and its ideological and scientific content at the same time and to the same extent. In the beginning it solved the most basic problems, i.e. it opened its doors to the broad masses of the youth of town and countryside and, in general, based its whole teaching and educative work on Marxist-Leninist science, there by ensuring a sound theoretical and ideological education of the rising generation. But with this, our school had not solved all the problems of the extension of the educational network in order to give the school a mass character, and it had still not solved all the urgent problems of the content of the teaching and education. Despite the improvements made in comparison with the pre-liberation school in the content of teaching and education our school, and especially the general secondary school and the higher school, were still detached from work and production, still bore the onesidedness inherited from the bourgeois school, that is, the preparation of the pupils was based on their theoretical training alone, thereby developing intellectualism and careerism. On the other hand, there were many manifestations of bourgeois ideology and old method in the teaching and educative work, as a result of the tradition of the old school and the insufficient struggle against idealist and religious ideology. In the work of the school there were numerous manifestations of pedagogical pedantism and bureaucracy, there was underestimation of the value of revolutionary action in the teaching work, there was a weak connection of school with the practice of the country's socialist construction, and in teaching and education. Marxist-Leninist class tendentiousness was not properly stressed. On the other hand, some links of the education system, especially the professional secondary school and the higher school, had not assumed the proper development and extension, and some artificial obstacles were making it difficult for the worker and peasant youth to attend these schools.

Thus, the new demands of the times, at the present stage of the economic and social development of our country, and the need to overcome the shortcomings in our education system and in the work of the school, were the two factors which determined the objective necessity of the new leap forward in the whole of our educational system, which was defined in the decisions of the 8th Plenum of the Party.

The decisions of this Plenum opened new vistas to our school, in the extension of the school network as well as in the deepening and further revolutionisation of its socialist content. In connection with the extension of the school network, alongside the complete realisation of the compulsory 8-year schooling (which was fully implemented in the 1969-1970 school-year), the task of rapidly developing the professional secondary school with pupils
attending full time courses and also attending them while working, in the town and especially in the countryside, was laid down, so as to create conditions to draw in the broadest possible numbers of youth to attend these schools. On the other hand, the raising of the general cultural subjects in these schools to the level of the general secondary schools, opens new perspectives to them, in as much as practical conditions, are created for the pupils graduating from these schools to carry on to higher schools, without any restriction. Appreciable results were achieved in this direction during the fourth 5-year plan for the development of our socialist economy and culture, in the years 1966-1970. In 1970 which was the last year of the five-year period, the number of secondary schools with pupils attending full time courses reached 131 as against 108 in 1965, of which 22 are in the countryside. There were 40,000 pupils, including 16,830 peasants attending these schools. In the same year there were 281 part time secondary schools attended by 40,026 pupils, including 122 in the countryside. This is an exceptionally great success for our country of 2 million inhabitants. This has made it possible for nearly 66 per cent of the pupils finishing the 8 year school in the countryside to attend these secondary schools with full time and part time courses, and the lower professional schools, at a time when the 8 year school has assumed a really mass character. During the fourth five year plan the professional secondary schools graduated about 22,000 middle cadres and the higher schools about 6,700 highly trained cadres. In 1970, the total number of middle cadres in our country reached 38,000 persons and that of high cadres - 15,000 persons.

Still greater prospect are opened to our people's education under the fifth five year plan for the development of our people's economy and culture, which includes the years 1971-1975. During the new five-year plan period 70 more new secondary schools with full time courses, 60 of them in the countryside, will be opened. In the main these will be professional secondary schools. The total number of pupils attending the professional secondary schools with full time courses will reach 42,000, whereas the number of those attending all types of secondary schools with full time courses will reach 71,000. In this total the number of peasant pupils will reach 35,300.

From the above the trend of this development towards the superiority of the professional schools with full time and part time courses emerges clearly. In particular, the secondary school will be
extended more rapidly in the countryside. Taking into consideration these contingents, and some 60,000 persons who will attend the secondary schools with part-time courses, it is expected that by the end of the 5th five-year plan about 42,000 cadres will graduate from professional secondary schools. Similar prospects open also, before higher education with full time and part time courses. By the end of the new five-year plan the number of full time students will reach 15,750 whereas under the part-time system the number of students will reach 19,660. At these rates of development of higher education, in 1975 we shall have 14.4 students per 1,000 inhabitants, instead of 11.8 as in 1970. According to the forecasts, 20,000 highly trained cadres will graduate from higher schools at the end of 1975, while the number of pupils and students will reach 780,000.

FOR THE FURTHER DEEPENING OF THE SOCIALIST CONTENT OF THE NEW SCHOOL

The struggle for the realisation of the tasks of the development in breadth of the revolution in the field of the school and education has been organically integrated with the struggle for the implementation of the great tasks of deepening the socialist content of the school and its method.

A colossal job has been done in these recent years to base the teaching-educative work of the school completely on Marxist-Leninist science, so that everything in its activity is permeated by the materialist philosophy and policy of the party. All the fundamental teaching materials and documents of the school for this purpose, such as plans, curricula and text-books have been completely worked out. A big job has been done to raise the teaching and educative work to a higher level from the ideopolitical and pedagogical-scientific viewpoint, serious efforts have been made for the organic integration of lessons with productive work and physical and military training; the struggle is being waged everywhere for a sound combination of the three components: lessons-productive work-physical and military training, and for their implementation in ideopolitical, pedagogical-scientific and methodic unity; work is continuing over a broad front to revolutionize the methods of teaching and management, broadly applying socialist democracy and the mass line in the whole life of the school. All this has increased the healthy revolutionary political spirit at school; teaching and education have become more militant and contribute ef-
fectively to the revolutionary education of the youth; theory is being integrated ever better with practice, the school with life, the pupils and teachers with production and with the men and women of the working class and the cooperativist peasantry, and they live closer to their troubles, problems, and revolutionary impetus. The whole life of our school today is permeated by the revolutionary tempo and by the spirit of irreconciliability with everything alien to socialist ideology and morality. The life of our school, which is developing as an inseparable part of our socialist life, is being renewed and revolutionised on this basis. In this way, the role of our youth and of its organisation in the life of the school and in the whole life of the country is being increased.

But we are aware that the strides that have been made so far in the struggle for the implementation of the historic decisions of the 8th Plenum of the Party are only the beginning of a big and all-round job which has to be done on the entire front of education and the school in order to deepen the processes of the revolutionisation of the teaching and educative work as a whole. In the first place the ideological work in the school must be strengthened and everything should be explained better and more profoundly and interpreted on the basis of the philosophy of dialectical and historic materialism, fighting to uproot any manifestation of bourgeois and religious ideology. It was precisely this fundamental problem of our school which the 6th Congress of the Party emphasised. In his report to the Congress comrades Enver Hoxha said: «...Questions of the content always remain the most fundamental ones. Therefore the complete and rapid carrying out of the tasks we have laid down, the further theoretical working out on the basis of practical experience, of the ideological, scientific and pedagogical questions of the content of the teaching and educative work, especially of the school programmes and text-books, constitutes our main preoccupation.»

Armed with these teachings our school must go, still more deeply into all the components of the teaching and educative process, strive to raise the quality of its work and the educative and formative effectiveness of its teaching, try to give the pupils the most solid and lasting knowledge, on the basis of the latest data of science, to arouse in the pupils and students the greatest possible interest in and love for science and technology and encourage their initiative and creative spirit, work more systematically and with greater concern for the modernization of the lessons and teaching methods as an indispensable condition for a healthy and active training of the rising generation, fight in a more organized manner, and in cooperation with the men of production and military training, and draw from this the greatest possible benefits for the revolutionary training of the younger generation. This is a great range of complex problems of an ideo-theoretical and pedagogical-scientific character, which, in addition to a persistent work on the part of the schools, required the mobilisation of the whole army of teachers and the organisation of profound revolutionary research-experimental work, with the participation of the teachers and pupils.

Although the tasks are great and complex, we are convinced that we shall realize them with success and shall raise our school to a higher level. Therefore, we are working with enthusiasm and optimism and are marching ahead blazing new trails for the creation of a truly socialist school.