The Effect of Post-4 June Re-education Campaigns on Chinese Students

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Nearly four years have passed since China's leaders ordered the military to crush student demonstrators and their supporters in and around Tiananmen Square. Since then, students at all levels have been given a massive infusion of political "re-education" in an attempt to forestall a recurrence of the turbulence and, more ambitiously, to win back the hearts and minds of Chinese youth. The methods employed by the authorities have included an extended programme of military training, tighter political control over the job assignment system, more time in the curriculum for politics courses, a renewed stress on familiar model personages from the pre-Cultural Revolution era, an upgrading in the status of political work cadres, and an abandonment of the more flexible political and moral education courses and textbooks introduced in the 1980s in favour of a return to more traditional "classical" Marxist approaches.

This article examines the extent to which these new policies have succeeded in, first, creating the conditions which will enable the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to maintain a stable political system free from the kind of student unrest which has twice – in 1986 and 1989 – burst forth to alter significantly the process of China's political and economic reforms; and secondly, reversing the erosion of political authority which had been so visible even before the 1989 demonstrations. It concentrates on some specific cases of attempted re-education as reported in Chinese newspapers and journals, although particular attention is also given to the effects of military training, the revival of the Lei Feng model, and the relation between student values and patriotism, as defined by Chinese authorities. Data on both universities and secondary schools are presented.

It is argued that the regime has thus far been very successful in maintaining a stable political situation. Indeed, following his "Southern Tour" of 1992 Deng Xiaoping asserted, and the Central Committee and Politburo have concurred, that the danger of "upheaval" (or "rightism") had become less of a threat to socialism than the continuation of the stultifying "leftist" ideas which marked policy-making in the post-4 June era.[1] At the same time, however, there appears to be ample evidence from a variety of sources, including survey data, interviews and at times even the official press, that while the regime has been able to win outward compliance from students and youth in a number of areas, it has made little headway in penetrating the belief systems of young people.

This is not really surprising since educational and political officials have consistently emphasized that campus and general social stability

1. See CPC Central Committee Document No. 2, translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service Daily Report, *China* (hereafter *FBIS-CHI*, 13 March 1992, pp. 20–23 (Hong Kong *Jingji ribao*, 12 March) and *FBIS-CHI*, 12 March 1992, pp. 20–21 (Xinhua, 11 March).

are the regime's highest priorities. Moreover, the regime's loss of authority began well before the 1989 crackdown, particularly in the aftermath of the 1986–87 student demonstrations. From this perspective, student response to post-4 June policies can be seen in large part as merely a continuation of earlier attitudes and behavioural patterns. Even before the 1986 demonstrations the reform process had "opened up" the system sufficiently for Chinese youth to have a variety of options through which to pursue upward mobility. State institutions that had long held the key to an individual's success, such as the Party, the military, state enterprises, and the key schools and universities, could now be bypassed, diminishing the state's ability to control social change and the behaviour of individuals.[2] Since 4 June there has been some attempt to reassert that control. However, except in those areas where state policy can directly affect student life chances – as in the job assignment system for university graduates – the evidence suggests that students are simply not listening to the larger political messages. In the short term, the regime's strategy is likely to be effective. But the potential for instability remains strong in a political system which has yet to make the transition from the first generation of revolutionary leaders, where fundamental decisions regarding basic economic strategies are still contentious, and in which the nation's youth no longer accept the basic principles on which state was founded.

The primary data source for this study is the Chinese press. This includes widely-circulated newspapers such as *Renmin ribao*, as well as restricted circulation academic journals intended for an audience of specialists. Generally, the official press is intended at least as much to educate the public on the current political line as to inform. With the maintenance of stability superceding other values at present, Party organs such as *Renmin ribao* have become even more uniform in presenting positive examples of the regime's success in transforming student attitudes. Internally-circulated academic journals on youth and education offer a different picture. They tend to be more forthcoming in discussing successes and failures, largely by introducing case studies submitted from various parts of the country. This often includes the results of survey research, which has become very common in assessing student attitudes. However, such data should be used with some caution, especially at a time when students are well aware that "incorrect" answers will reveal that they have not been re-educated and may affect their futures.[3] Indeed, a number of the

2. Stanley Rosen, "The impact of reform policies on youth attitudes," in Deborah Davis and Ezra Vogel (eds.), *Chinese Society on the Eve of Tiananmen: The Impact of Reform* (Cambridge: Harvard Council on East Asian Studies, 1990), pp. 283–305.

3. On the methodological problems of Chinese surveys, see Stanley Rosen and David Chu, *Survey Research in the People's Republic of China* (Washington, D.C.: United States Information Agency, 1987) and Stanley Rosen, "Value change among post-Mao youth: the evidence from survey data," in Perry Link, Richard Madsen and Paul Pickowicz (eds.), *Unofficial China: Popular Culture and Thought in the People's Republic* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989), pp. 193–216. On more specific problems with surveys after 4 June, see Stanley Rosen, "Students and the state in China: the crisis in ideology and organization," in Arthur L. Rosenbaum (ed.), *State and Society in China: The Consequences of Reform* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), pp. 167–191.

published surveys refer to the divergence between the students' true beliefs and the more "acceptable" responses given to authorities. Nevertheless, these surveys remain one of the most important sources for understanding changing student attitudes and the difficulties facing political work cadres. Surprisingly, many of them reveal a good deal of independence of thought by China's students, and opposition to the current political line. They are cited extensively in this article.

Another source of information has been the Hong Kong press. With extensive contacts in China and access to internal documents, this can provide vital material unavailable elsewhere. Finally, data from recent visits to China, including discussions and interviews with officials and friends involved in youth and education work, are employed where relevant.

Surveys on the Effects of Re-education

On the basis of the evidence available – including interviews and research in Chinese libraries – it seems reasonable to suggest that many, perhaps most, universities have undertaken studies on the attitudes of their students toward the "turmoil," and how these attitudes have changed after "re-education." While the official press has frequently noted the positive effects of such tools of re-education as increased political study and military training, investigation reports which have appeared only in *neibu* academic journals have been rather less sanguine. It is useful to begin, however, with the most detailed of the widely reported success stories.

An investigation of the changes in political outlook of 400 university students in the Wuhan area was conducted over a six-month period beginning in August 1990. The scale of the investigation, the prominent coverage (with pictures) of the results in *Renmin ribao* and the lengthy editorial note all make it clear that this was intended as a model for other areas to use in re-educating their student bodies.[4] Leading cadres under the Hubei Provincial Party Committee's College Working Committee personally organized the investigation; members of the Party committee, along with 450 cadres and teachers in more than 20 higher education institutions directly participated in the study. Perhaps inadvertently, the report reveals the kind of intense pressure to conform facing the 400 "typical" students chosen for the study. For example, after being closely guided through "heart-to-heart talks," the students summed up what they had learned, and then filled out a questionnaire which, judging from the excerpts provided, appears to have been neatly packaged so that they could easily choose the correct answer from the multiple choices offered. Finally, the teachers wrote an investigation report on *each* of the students. The report did acknowledge, however, that such

4. *FBIS-CHI*, 14 March 1991, pp. 12–18 (*Renmin ribao*, 6 March). A book-length report of the findings appears under the title *1989: moran huishou* (*1989: Sudden Flashback*) (Wuhan: Hubei renmin chubanshe, 1991).

successful transformation of ideological views might not be achieved without the painstaking ideological work accompanying the Wuhan investigation. As to the results, 87 per cent of the students felt they had made "substantial progress" in their political consciousness; the proportion of students who agreed that "it is necessary to take the socialist road with Chinese characteristics" increased from 54 per cent before the "turmoil" to 80 per cent; the proportion who agreed that "as long as the economy can develop, it does not matter which road is taken" decreased from 25 per cent to 4 per cent, and so forth.

Of course most colleges do not have such abundant resources with which to intimidate students into accepting the current political line. Nevertheless, they did engage in re-education programmes and at times published their results in academic journals. One interesting study was conducted by the moral education and research office of the Hangzhou Electronics Industry Institute.[5] On some issues, the institute's political workers were having a difficult time convincing the students to adopt the Party's views. For example, only 54 per cent of the students in two classrooms of seniors agreed that a multi-party system was not suitable for China; 26.5 per cent disagreed, while another 19.5 per cent maintained an open mind on the subject (*kankan zai shuo*). The surveyors also noted that the changes in Eastern Europe had compounded the difficulties.

More generally, it was discovered that 69 per cent of the junior class still felt "a sense of setback" (*cuozhe gan*). Table 1 breaks down their responses more specifically, showing that most students had not changed their minds, only buried their feelings temporarily. Table 2 offers more specific evidence by examining the level of participation in the demonstrations by juniors and seniors, and their reaction to education and propaganda. In addition to showing widespread support and sympathy for the demonstrations, the findings show that only 2–3 per cent "deeply believed" the Party's explanation of events. On the other hand, 24 per cent of the senior class "consciously and willingly accepted" their re-education – which is clearly not equivalent to "deeply believing" it – compared to only 9 per cent of the juniors. For third year students, 81 per cent were either completely unaffected by the re-education process or only "grudgingly" (*mianqiang*) acknowledged some result; the comparable figure for the senior class was 58 per cent. The surveyors noted that seniors had been more malleable because of their concern for their forthcoming job assignments.

A researcher at the youth institute of the Guangxi Academy of Social Sciences conducted a far more extensive investigation of student attitudes at six Guangxi colleges from November to December 1990, anticipating that three semesters of political education would allow for a more "objective" analysis of student attitudes.

5. Li Weiqi, "Guanyu xuechao huajie de celuexing sikao" ("On thinking about the tactics to use in transforming the student unrest"), *Qingnian yanjiu* (*Youth Studies*), No. 4 (April 1990), pp. 31–34.

Table 1: **Feelings Expressed by Third-Year Students at Hangzhou Electronics Industrial Institute After 4 June 1989**

Responses to 4 June	*%*
Don't think about it, try to forget it quickly	31
Don't be concerned with affairs of state any longer	12
Engage in silent protest	12
It's impossible to control one's feelings; they will often come out	8
Just go about life aimlessly	6
It doesn't matter; if you fail, just do it again	4
Try to get rid of one's feelings by devoting oneself to one's studies	19
Other	8

Source:
Li Weiqi, "Guanyu xuechao huajiede celuexing sikao" ("On thinking about the tactics to use in transforming the student unrest"), *Qingnian yanjiu* (Youth Studies), No. 4 (April 1990), p. 32.

Table 2: **Participation in the 1989 Demonstrations by Third and Fourth-Year Students at Hangzhou Electronics Industrial Institute and their Reaction to the Re-education Campaign**

Performance and attitude toward the demonstrations	*Year in school*	*%*	*Reaction to propaganda and education*	*Year in school*	*%*
Supported and participated	3	68	Turned a deaf ear, no result	3	28
	4	53		4	20
Did not support, but sympathized and observed	3	28	Some result, but only grudgingly	3	53
	4	34		4	38
Opposed, looked down on, resisted	3	2	Consciously and willingly accept it; comparatively successful	3	9
	4	2.4		4	24
Unconcerned, did not participate	3	2	Accept it in my heart and deeply believe it	3	3
	4	10		4	2

Source:
Li Weiqi, "Thinking about the tactics," p. 33.

Table 3 shows clearly that the higher the year in school, the more likely one will be sceptical of the official explanation of the 1989 events. Thus, while more than half the freshmen surveyed accepted and understood the Party's verdict, over 60 per cent of the seniors remained unconvinced.[6]

Even when a majority of students have apparently accepted the

6. Luo Guolan, "Xianzhuang yu fenxi" ("The existing state of affairs and our analysis"), *Qingshaonian tantao* (*Youth Inquiry*), No. 3 (1991), pp. 10–18.

Table 3: **What is Your View of the Party Central's Verdict on the Political Turmoil in Spring–Summer 1989?** ($n = 708$)

Choices	*First year students*		*Second year students*		*Third year students*		*Fourth year students*		*Totals*	
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
It was correct; I fully understand it	161	54.58	59	39.60	60	31.58	17	22.97	297	41.95
It was correct, but I don't fully understand it	43	14.58	29	19.46	40	21.05	9	12.16	121	17.09
Let history decide	88	29.83	61	40.94	87	45.79	47	63.51	283	39.97
I don't understand it	3	1.01	0	0.00	3	1.58	1	1.35	7	0.99

Source:
Luo Guoan, "Xianzhuang yu fenxi" ("The existing state of affairs and our analysis"), (Guangxi) *Qingshaonian tantao*, No. 3 (1991), p. 11.

Table 4: **Comparison of Secondary School Students' Views on the 1987 and 1989 Demonstrations** ($n = 100$)
Question: If you were a university student during the recent disturbances, what would you have done?

	1987 sample	*1989 sample*
Participate	9	12
Not participate	43	35
Watch the excitement	34	38
Not participate and also dissuade others from participating	14	15

Source:
Song Xinmin, "Zhongxuesheng dui Tiananmen fengbode kanfa" ("The views of secondary school students on the Tiananmen turmoil"), *Qingnian yanjiu*, No. 2 (February 1990), p. 28.

Party's view on some issues, they remain obdurate in other areas. For example, a study of the effects of "concentrated re-education" at the Shandong Textile Industry Institute found that 53 per cent of the students now acknowledged that the turmoil and unrest had fundamentally trampled on the Constitution, while another 22 per cent felt that while the turmoil did not violate the Constitution, it did violate other laws. At the same time, however, political workers were concerned that 56 per cent of the students still felt that demonstrations, marches, and big and small character posters were proper and legal methods to deal with the problem of corruption.[7]

Since secondary school students played only a minor role in the 1989 demonstrations, there are few surveys on their re-education. Nevertheless, Table 4 reports some of the findings from an intriguing survey of high-achieving future university students at the attached secondary school of Wuhan University. Surveyed after the 1987 and 1989 demonstrations, the students were asked whether they would have participated had they been university students. Significantly, while at least 50 per cent in both years said they would not, only 14–15 per cent would also have made an attempt to dissuade others from participating. Moreover, the surveyors made little distinction between the non-participants and the more activist elements, affirming both as backbone elements of the state. This "decollectivization of morality" clearly has important political implications. Before the Cultural Revolution, the link between students and the state was strong in part because of the fierce competition among upwardly mobile student activists who monitored their classmates to prevent any deviation from the regime's core values. With the students no

7. Fan Yucai and Gong Peizhang, "Daxuesheng sixiang zhuangkuang de diaocha yu fenxi" ("An investigation and analysis of the thinking of university students"), *Shandong fangzhi gongxueyuan jiaoyu yanjiu* (*Shandong Textile Engineering Institute Educational Research*), No. 2 (April 1990), pp. 16–19.

longer "true believers," and a reward structure no longer so fully under the control of the state, political activism in support of regime values is now rare. Nor do school authorities really expect it any more. Much of the re-education programme's success in maintaining stability on the campuses can be traced to the state's control over important areas of each student's life, particularly job assignment.

Finally, there are those surveys which examine the response of students to the Party's attempt at removing the underlying causes of the demonstrations, such as corruption. One of the more extensive was conducted in May 1990 in Fujian province, with almost 4,000 students from eight tertiary institutions and four key high schools taking part.[8] The students had been informed of the Party's strenuous efforts to clean up official corruption (*guandao*) and the positive results which had been achieved, but when asked whether they were "comparatively satisfied" with current Party workstyle and the general mood in society, only 40 respondents (1.1 per cent) said they were; by contrast, 2,118 students were not satisfied (58.73 per cent). When asked about their views of the 1989 student movement, 25.13 per cent either sympathized with or supported it, while another 19.58 per cent expressed no interest (*bu guanxin*). When asked about the escape of Yan Jiaqi, Wuer Kaixi and others who had fled abroad, 8.06 per cent said that they escaped at the right time, 34.21 per cent said they could not give a clear response (*jiang bu qingchu*), and 1.75 per cent said it showed their patriotism.

Military Training and the Re-emphasis on Lei Feng

One of the earliest decisions taken after 4 June was the imposition of mandatory military training, particularly for students accepted into some of China's most elite universities.[9] Beijing University (Beida) was made a test case. The entire class of 738 freshmen (down from 2,000 the year before) was sent to the Shijiazhuang Military Academy, 160 miles from Beijing, for a year of military training and political indoctrination. The students had no courses or reading material in their chosen fields of study, except for classes in English and Chinese. One course was devoted entirely to the authorities' crushing of the demonstrations.[10]

8. Lin Longfei, "Jiushi niandai daxuesheng sixiang zouxiang" ("The ideology of university students as we enter the 1990s"), *Qingnian yanjiu*, No. 6 (June 1991), pp. 10–14, 35.

9. For assessments of this programme, see *The New York Times*, 11 February 1991, p. A10; *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 17 October 1990, pp. A46–47; *The Christian Science Monitor*, 10 September 1991, p. 4; *FBIS-CHI*, 11 July 1990, pp. 29–30 (*South China Morning Post*, 9 July); *FBIS-CHI*, 8 January 1992, p. 33 (*South China Morning Post*, 8 January); Wu Yongchao, "Zhonggong jiaqiang xuesheng junxun jiaoyu" ("Chinese Communists strengthen military training education"), *Zhonggong yanjiu* (*Research on Chinese Communism*), April 1991, pp. 71–77; and Qing Ming, "Zhongguo daxuesheng junxun xin dongxiang" ("New trends in China's military training programme for university students"), *Guangjiaojing* (*Wide Angle*), July 1992, pp. 96–98.

10. Sarah Lubman, "Students at Beijing University trying to 'de-programme' freshmen exposed to year of indoctrination," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 17 October 1990, pp. A46–47.

Partly because of complaints that Beida was being singled out and punished for its role in the "turmoil," a similar programme was established in 1990 at Fudan University in Shanghai. By the summer of 1992, about 7,000 freshmen from these two universities had been trained at four army schools. Initial plans had called for additional universities to join the programme, with Nanjing University reportedly next in line, but funding problems made this impossible. One Hong Kong source estimated that the cost of a year of military training was 5,000 *yuan* per student.[11] Beida and Fudan were allocated money from a special state fund. More than 140 universities receive state money to conduct up to eight weeks of military training for freshmen, either on campuses or in army units. Most, however, are compelled to raise their own funds to finance short-term (generally 3–4 weeks) military training, with recent data from the State Education Commission indicating that approximately 200 universities have done so.[12] This suggests that the majority of China's 1,075 universities do not offer such training.

Has the programme worked? The official press offered enthusiastic accounts from satisfied students and campus educators and, indeed, it does appear that isolating 18-year-olds on a military base has produced some thought transformation.[13] There are several sources of problems, however. First, the students' parents have been unenthusiastic about their children "wasting" a year, turning undergraduate education into a five-year programme. Interviewees in Shanghai described their efforts to convince their children not to apply to Fudan. *Beijing qingnian bao*, in a generally positive report, confirmed that 80 per cent of the 345 parents of Beida students surveyed "grumbled" (*baoyuan*) or "were indignant" (*fenkai*) at the start of the programme. Among the students themselves, fewer than 30 per cent had a positive attitude at the start. Some parents compared military training to the rectification programmes of the Gang of Four. Others complained that their children were being forced to take medicine when it was Beida that was sick.[14]

Secondly, university officials and teachers have been critical of the consequences of the programme. One Beida administrator complained that the entrance examination score needed to enter the school had dropped 60 points, noting that many of the best students were now applying elsewhere.[15] Hong Kong journals have reported on

11. Lu Yan, "Daxuesheng junxun zhanting de beihou" ("Behind the temporary halt to military training for university students"), *Dongxiang* (*Trend*), November 1991, pp. 24–25.

12. *FBIS-CHI*, 1 July 1992, p. 43 (Xinhua, 27 June).

13. For an example of the official view, see *FBIS-CHI*, 5 December 1991, pp. 28–29 (*Renmin ribao*, Overseas Edition, 20 November).

14. Shu Wen, "Yubei yijunguan yu beida xin xuezi" ("Reserve duty officers and Beijing University's new young scholars"), *Beijing qingnian bao* (*Beijing Youth Daily*), 4 October 1991, p. 4.

15. Interview, 25 August 1992 in Beijing.

Beida's qualitative decline in comparison with other elite universities such as People's University.[16] By 1993–94 all students on campus will have taken part in the one-year training programme. Beida authorities have suggested to State Education Commission leaders that the programme has achieved its aims and should now be terminated; recent reports from Hong Kong note that their pleas are being answered.[17]

According to Hong Kong sources, more serious problems were revealed in a ten-page internal report which documented the findings of a secret survey by Beida officials.[18] Among other revelations, over 20 students became so distraught they had to be sent to a mental hospital for treatment. The problems appear to stem from the difficulties of being integrated into a campus of alienated, hostile students after spending a year in a virtually hermetically sealed environment in which independent thought was discouraged. Upon arrival at Beida, the new freshmen were housed in a special dormitory apart from other students, had a separate student union, and enrolled in separate classes. They needed special permission to participate in extracurricular activities outside their own programme. One former Beida activist aptly noted that they were being treated like foreigners. Other students often treated them with scorn, regarding them as having been "brainwashed," a point noted in the *Beijing qingnian bao* report. At the same time, some made discreet contact, seeking to "de-programme" them. The cognitive dissonance level, as they hear the Beida students' version of spring 1989, and seek to demonstrate that they *can* think independently, has become intolerably high for an undetermined number. The internal report notes that many students have now become resentful of their "forfeited" year, while a small number have burned their military uniforms or put up posters calling for an end to the military training programme.

The Lei Feng campaign. A new campaign to "Learn from Lei Feng" has also been a prominent feature of post-Tiananmen socialization efforts, particularly during 1991. While many Western observers have seen the campaign as merely a tool by the authorities for shaping youth values in a manner that guarantees unquestioning political loyalty – Lei's greatest desire was reportedly to be a rust-free screw to be used as the Communist Party indicated – some scholars tie the attractiveness of a Lei Feng to a continuing need by youth to find

16. Lu Yan, "Behind the temporary halt," p. 25; also, "Neibu xiaoxi" ("Internal information"), *Kaifang zazhi* (*Open Magazine*), No. 9 (September 1990), pp. 22–23, which singles out Beida, but also reports a more general decline in applicants to key schools, accompanied by a rise in applications to non-key universities. The exception appears to be in the area of foreign languages, where the desire to study abroad has led to higher test scores and better candidates.

17. Interview, 25 August 1992 in Beijing. On Beida's decision to rescind military training, see *Ming bao*, 27 February 1993, p. 6; on the likelihood of Fudan following suit, see *South China Morning Post*, 2 March 1993, p. 10.

18. *FBIS-CHI*, 7 October 1991, p. 36 (*Ming bao*, 7 October).

meaning in their lives.[19] The official press, of course, has frequently commented on the "upsurge of enthusiasm" to learn from Lei.[20]

Perhaps the most pessimistic account of the decline (*ruohua*) of Lei's appeal to youth is a study conducted among 675 soldiers in the Shandong Military District.[21] For example, 92 per cent of the soldiers no longer venerated Lei Feng. He had been replaced in their affections by scientists, reformers, literary figures, singers, film and sports stars. As the surveyors put it, many young people saw "the spirit of the rust-free screw" as incompatible with current needs.

A study of secondary school students in Jiaocheng county, Shanxi province, conducted in August 1990 revealed that Lei Feng had become a hard sell.[22] Some students in a senior high history class asked why Lei should be studied. After the teacher patiently answered, the whole class laughed uproariously. When one student responded, "No, you should say that what we need is money!" this was greeted with great applause. A survey of 100 students, 81 of whom were Communist Youth League (CYL) members and three of whom were Party members, found that 48 per cent did not believe in Marxism–Leninism. Unlike most investigation reports, this study appeared to offer no solution to such ideological problems.

One interesting study which provided less easily interpretable results was conducted by researchers affiliated with the political department of the General Staff Headquarters of the PLA.[23] In March 1990, they conducted a survey of 454 undergraduates at ten military academies under the General Staff Department. They were encouraged that around 95 per cent of the students wanted to study Lei Feng and felt that such study was needed. On closer analysis, however, they discovered that this seeming enthusiasm was seldom manifested in the students' lives. Many copies of Lei Feng diaries and stories were issued free, but most students were concerned mainly with reading material in their special subjects or heroic martial arts or love stories. At forums entitled "Lei Feng and I," the students commonly raised questions about personal issues such as their future job assignments or post-graduation possibilities, not about Lei Feng.

One problem was their confusion over how to study Lei Feng; after so many years and campaigns, it was hard to find real meaning in the

19. Gay Garland Reed, "The political implications of the 'Learn from Lei Feng' campaign in the PRC," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, New Orleans, April 1991.

20. *FBIS-CHI*, 6 March 1992, pp. 27–28 (Xinhua English, 5 March, from *Renmin ribao*).

21. Wang Guisheng, "Guanyu Lei Feng de dianxing xiaoying ruohua wenti de sikao" ("Thoughts on the problem of the declining effect of the Lei Feng model"), *Qingnian yanjiu*, No. 3 (March 1990), pp. 42–45.

22. Zhang Biao and Zhang Jianming, "Dui zhongxiaoxue deyu de yousi" ("Anxious thoughts on primary and middle school moral education"), *Qingnian yanjiu*, No. 4 (April 1991), pp. 18–20.

23. Li Kaicheng and Geng Yansheng, "Xue Lei Feng huodong de rechao yu lengsi" ("The warm tide and the cold thoughts in the movement to study Lei Feng"), *Qingnian yanjiu*, No. 1 (January 1991), pp. 26–33.

model. Lei could be applied to anything and everything. For example, 41.2 per cent saw the essence of Lei Feng study in "punishing those who are corrupt, rectifying Party style, and changing the unequal social distribution." But the biggest obstacle was the general dissatisfaction about society. Thus, 82.4 per cent of the students complained that "without punishing corruption, the mere study of Lei Feng could not change the bad social environment," and 62.9 per cent felt that, "in a bad social environment, it is useless for me to study Le Feng." In addition, 34.1 per cent felt that Lei Feng's principles and methods were fundamentally unworkable in the real world. This view was particularly common among students from Guangdong and other coastal areas. Another 33.9 per cent felt that "a new model was needed for the 1990s, that it was not absolutely necessary to study Lei Feng."

The Chinese media took great pains to make Lei relevant to current needs, with mixed and sometimes comical results. The Western press has often poked fun at Lei's malleability and his updating for the commodity economy. Most recently, they picked up on a story in *Jingji cankao bao* which reported on how the Huli branch of the Chinese Industrial and Commercial Bank in Xiamen has been using Lei as its "secret weapon" in the battle with its competitors, and has scored some remarkable victories as a result. The bank's success has fuelled a "Study Lei Feng fire" in Xiamen and, the story noted, even a few foreign banks are starting to appreciate the benefits of studying the model soldier. Perhaps it is not surprising that bankers in the south would use Lei to increase market share (the bank in question now provides 60 per cent of all loans in the Huli Industrial Zone) but it does tend to dilute the original meaning of the model.[24]

Models and the Decline of Political Authority after 1986

The apparent ineffectiveness of the Lei Feng campaign after 4 June should not be seen in isolation. Significant changes in Chinese society throughout the 1980s had already made such models unattractive to Chinese youth. The key event was the student demonstrations of 1986 and their aftermath, although the trends became most pronounced by 1988. Thus, student attitudes after 4 June represent a continuation of these earlier trends.[25]

One survey of 2,658 students from 29 universities in Jiangxi province gives some indication of those individuals considered worthy of emulation by 1988. As Table 5 shows, Lei Feng received support from only 2 per cent of the students. The most popular, Wen Yuankai, was a prominent professor at the Chinese University of

24. *FBIS-CHI*, 22 January 1992, pp. 30–31 (*South China Morning Post*, 20 January).
25. The situation is complicated by the difficulty of conducting "objective surveys" in the post-4 June atmosphere, a problem noted in some of the surveys published in restricted circulation journals.

Science and Technology, a leading reformer and a former member of the National People's Congress. He was an eloquent speaker, was acquainted with Zhao Ziyang, then general secretary of the CCP, and was considered to be very open to new ideas. He was also respected because he had written a letter to Deng Xiaoping in 1977, suggesting that the national entrance examinations for university be restored. In the aftermath of 4 June he was heavily criticized, although he was finally allowed to travel abroad in 1992.

Table 5: **Which of the Following People Would You Most Like to Emulate?** ($n = 2,658$)

Responses	%
Wen Yuankai	24.8
Qu Xiao	18.5
Xu Liang	15.7
Li Ruihuan	14.2
Jiang Zhuying	11.2
Chen Jingrun	6.9
Lei Feng	2.0

Source:
Wen Zhizhou, "Ershijiusuo gaoxiao xuesheng xinli diaocha fankui zongshu" ("Summarizing the feedback from an investigation of the psychology of students from 29 universities"), *Jiangxi gaojiao yanjiu*, No. 1 (March 1988), p. 28.

Qu Xiao, who received the second largest number of votes, was chosen primarily out of sympathy. He had been exiled in Qinghai as a rightist for 20 years, but never lost faith in the Party. Students saw parallels between his case and the fictional lead character in the popular film *The Herdsman* (*Mumaren*). Xu Liang also evoked a great deal of sympathy. A singer, he volunteered to serve in the brief Chinese campaign against Vietnam in 1979, lost both his legs and became a war hero. Li Ruihuan was the mayor of Tianjin and is now a member of the standing committee of the Politburo. His popularity stemmed from his reputation as an honest official and reformer, with *Renmin ribao* enhancing this image in several articles. Perhaps most important, Li was compared to Li Xiangnan, the fictional official of the popular novel and television mini-series *New Star* (*Xinxing*). Jiang Zhuying was a "model intellectual" who devoted his life to his work to the extent that he neglected to treat his cancer, leading to his premature death. Chen Jingrun, an outstanding mathematician, scored only slightly higher than Lei Feng, which was the biggest surprise to the surveyors. Chen had been extremely popular among students at the beginning of the reform programme, even briefly

challenging Lei Feng as a model worthy of emulation.[26] According to interviewees, Chen's decline in popularity stemmed from his "nerdiness." He had no known interests apart from mathematics and science, making it difficult for him to compete with other brilliant scientists who were also active in public life.

A more complete picture of the changing popularity of models among secondary school students can be seen in the results of six surveys conducted from 1982 to 1992 under the auspices of Beijing Teachers' Training College.[27] First, the surveyors note a gradual broadening in model choices over time. In the initial survey of 1,000 students, the most admired and respected personages were revolutionaries such as Marx, Mao, and Zhou Enlai. In 1985, officially-sanctioned youth models like Lei Feng and Zhang Haidi were still the most popular "youth images" (*qingnian xingxiang*). By 1988, however, the results were much more complex, with choices ranging from political and military figures to athletes and performers. The choice of historical and even fictitious characters was particularly dismaying to the researchers.

A second, related change over this period was the decline of interest in officially-sanctioned models and their replacement in some cases even by problematic personages whom the authorities viewed as "anti-models." Thirdly, the number of students who chose themselves as models gradually increased from none in 1982, 2 per cent in 1985, and 4 per cent in 1988, to 18 per cent in 1991, before dropping to 11 per cent in 1992. Fourthly, the influence of the West had become prevalent, with well-known Western scientists, politicians and military figures, and even athletes and second-rate performers being chosen. The researchers were dismayed that "third-rate and fourth-rate Western movie stars that the majority of adults had never heard of" were preferred over first-rate famous Chinese actors who had won international prizes.

Those endorsed by the Party and CYL were seen by the students as too far removed from their own lives, but there were no obvious new models. In one of the 1992 surveys, for example, when the students were asked which of the new models they preferred and what kind of models they felt would be appropriate in the future, 6 per cent did not answer, 10 per cent wrote "none," 16 per cent wrote "the same models we've always had," 8 per cent filled in their own names, and the remaining 60 per cent gave answers which were "indecipherable" (*mohu bu queqie de yuyan*).

Survey research on student attitudes and indicators of actual behaviour also strongly suggest the regime's loss of political authority

26. When *Zhongguo qingnian* (*China Youth*) resumed publication, a discussion forum from September 1978 to January 1979 contrasted Chen's expertise to Lei's "redness." For details, see Stanley Rosen, "Prosperity, privatization and China's youth," *Problems of Communism*, March–April 1985, p. 5.

27. Jin Zhongliang, "Guanyu zhongxuesheng 'bangyang' wenti de diaocha" ("Investigations on the question of 'models' among secondary school students"), *Beijing qingnian gongzuo yanjiu* (*Research on Youth Work in Beijing*), No. 5 (May 1992), p. 28.

following the student demonstrations of late 1986. Indeed, this is a frequent topic for discussion in restricted circulation journals. One of several reports is provided in a series of surveys on university students in Beijing conducted between 1986 and the end of 1989 by a research group under the Beijing municipal Party committee.[28] Particularly dramatic are the results shown in Table 6 on the ideals students feel they should hold. Expressed support for Communism drops from 38.1 per cent in 1986 to 7.2 per cent in 1987, whereas reliance only on patriotism and/or one's own skills score particularly well in 1987 and 1988. The impact of the Tiananmen events on student attitudes, however, comes out less clearly in this set of surveys. For example, the percentages of those favouring political pluralism in China move from 20.5 per cent (1986) to 50.2 per cent (April 1989) back to 23.8 per cent (December 1989). At the same time, as late as December 1989, when asked whether China could import the Western democratic system, 51.3 per cent either answered affirmatively or said they were not sure, while only 46.5 per cent firmly opposed this notion. Moreover, 36.6 per cent still felt that it was legal to use "Great Democracy" (including big character posters, demonstrations and so forth) to solve problems.

Table 6: **What Ideals Do You Think University Students Should Establish?**

	(%)		
	1986	*1987*	*1988*
Communism	38.1	7.2	6.1
Socialism	16.4	13.5	5.0
Only patriotism, social ideals are not necessary	28.1	55.0	40.1
Humanism	13.8	—	—
Anarchism	1.3	—	—
"Rely on one's own skills to survive"	—	10.5	29.2
Other	—	8.9	16.4

Source:
Lu Jia, "Zhengzhi shehuihua guochengzhong de wuqu" ("Mistakes in the process of political socialization"), *Qingnian yanjiu*, No. 1 (January 1992), p. 37.

In another set of surveys summarized by researchers from the CYL school in Wuhan, the decline of ideology and the growth of

28. Lü Jia, "Zhengzhi shehuihua guochengzhong de wuqu" ("Mistakes in the process of political socialization"), *Qingnian yanjiu*, No. 1 (January 1992), pp. 32–37. A book-length report of the findings appears under the title *Dui bashi niandai shoudu daxuesheng zongxiang yanjiu* (*Research on University Students in the Capital in the 1980s*) (Beijing: Beijing shifan xueyuan chubanshe, 1990).

pragmatism among university students is traced.[29] While they see a slight improvement in the students' ability to distinguish correct and incorrect ideological concepts as a result of post-4 June political study sessions, they seem less sanguine with regard to the restoration of authority. For example, they note pessimistically that a June 1988 study of university students in Beijing had found that 60.4 per cent of the students considered themselves "the generation that pays no attention to authority" (*moshi quanwei de yidai*), while 76.7 per cent demanded "independent thinking" (*duli sikao*) in their activities. Only 7.5 per cent were willing to "obey authority" (*fucong quanwei*).

These results are reinforced by some of the available data on the actual behaviour of students. Table 7 reports on Party and CYL membership among university students from 1956 to 1988. It should be noted that the increasing figures for league membership have been concurrent with the decline of the organization's relevance to the lives of the students. This is in sharp contrast to the 1950s and early 1960s when entering the CYL was hotly contested, and membership was an important indicator of upward mobility. Party membership figures are more revealing. Although these aggregate figures mask some important details – for example, Party membership among students grew significantly from 1984 to 1986 – they do show the decline of student Party members by 1988. More specific studies make clear that the "slippage" (*huapo*) began straight after the December 1986 demonstrations. As several sources note, as a result of problems with the Party's workstyle, "the CCP's ability to attract the masses had weakened and the political enthusiasm of the students had declined."[30]

Unfortunately, reliable aggregated data on student Party membership after 4 June has been difficult to obtain. However, internal documents which address this issue have begun to appear in the Hong Kong press. One document on job assignment for 1991 graduates of Beijing universities shows how the authorities have attempted to make the political behaviour of students the determining factor in mobility opportunities.[31] Universities under the State Education Commission which recruit and assign students nationally have been told not to allow anyone "who is not ideologically qualified" to remain in Beijing. Beijing's conservative political leadership has adopted similar guidelines for universities under the municipality,

29. Liu Dehuan and Yang Liwei, "Gaige kaifang dui daxuesheng jiazhi guannian de yingxiang" ("The influence of reform and opening up on the values of university students"), *Qingnian yanjiu*, No. 1 (January 1992), pp. 1–8, 14.

30. Li Jinkun and Yang Fenghe, "'Gaoxuexiao youxiu xuesheng dangyuan chengzhang guilu' diaocha baogao" ("An investigation and research report on 'The pattern through which outstanding university student Party members grow to maturity'"), *Tianjin gaojiao yanjiu* (*Tianjin Higher Education Research*), No. 2 (1990), pp. 12–24, which is a study of Party recruitment and membership at ten key universities; Li Feng, "Jiaqiang dang de jianshe shi qianghua gaoxiao sixiang zhengzhi gongzuo de zhongyao huanjie" ("Strengthening Party construction is an important link in consolidating the University ideological and political work"), *Gaojiao yanjiu* (*Higher Education Research*) (Xian), No. 2 (1989), pp. 18–22.

31. *FBIS-CHI*, 26 August 1991, pp. 25–27 (*Bai xing* (*Common People*), 16 August).

Table 7: **Communist Party and Youth League Members Among University Students**

	1956	1978	(%) 1980	1985	1988
Party members	8.6	10.8	4.4	4.7	2.9
Youth League members	57.3	60.4	76.2	82.3	86.9

Source:
Zhongguo shehui tongji ziliao 1990 (*Statistical Data on Chinese Society*) (Zhongguo tongji chubanshe, 1990), p. 173.

which normally recruit and assign locally. As a result, many graduates recruited from the municipality have been assigned to the outer suburbs. At the same time, some from outside the city have been allowed to remain in the urban area because they had "profound poor and lower-middle peasants' feelings toward the Party and socialism." Proper political behaviour is gauged in a number of ways, including enthusiastic attendance at politics classes and in military training. One important criterion is the "active demand" to join the Party after 4 June, "despite others' satirical attacks."

The State Education Commission has also reportedly issued a proposal entitled "The Most Urgent Problems Facing Ideological and Political Work in Universities and Our Basic Methods to Solve Them."[32] Problems of Party recruitment are dealt with more directly in this document. Those seeking Party membership are commonly seen by other students as political opportunists. Some submitting applications have asked Party committees not to reveal this if they are not admitted, fearing ridicule as a "failed opportunist." Other students are concerned that while applying to enter the Party now can bring benefits, if the situation in China changes, the existence of this application in one's permanent file can later become a "political blemish" (*zhengzhi wudian*).

Hong Kong sources must always be used with caution, but the mainland press has also frequently commented openly on the less than pure motivations of student Party applicants. For example, a study of Party recruitment and membership at the 30 non-key universities in the Wuhan district found that only 1,160 students (1.8 per cent) were Party members, and that 56.8 per cent of classes had none. While the surveyors were gratified that 26.7 per cent of the students had applied for Party membership, they noted that the motivations for joining were "rather complicated." A survey of 349

32. Zhong Jie, "Fan heping yanbianxia guaidiao: yao zhao gongnongbing daxuesheng" ("Combatting peaceful evolution's strange tune: the recruitment of worker-peasant-soldier university students"), *Bai xing*, 16 November 1991, pp. 7–8.

applicants at one university uncovered the following motivations: 15 per cent had a Communist belief system and were dedicated to serving the people; 31 per cent had honest feelings and respect toward the Party; 15 per cent had been influenced by their family, school or other social forces and were following the trend (*sui daliu*); 32 per cent sought to use the status and political power of the Party as a means to realize their own aspirations or ambitions; 5 per cent sought direct personal benefits, such as getting a good job assignment, becoming an official or making money. A small minority wanted to transform the essence of the Party.[33]

Belief Systems, Patriotism and the Pursuit of the Foreign

One of the key strategies used by the Chinese government after Tiananmen was to link socialism closely with patriotism. In the official press, patriotism was seen as a historical phenomenon with different meanings under different historical conditions. After 4 June, it meant "loving socialist New China, which is under the leadership of the Communist Party." Or, as a *Renmin ribao* commentary succinctly put it, "today, to love the motherland, one must love socialism."[34] Privately, however, some educational officials have admitted that they would gladly settle for less. As one interviewee noted, before the Cultural Revolution, moral education stressed three levels. Most basically, students were to be trained to be good, obedient citizens and not to harm others. At the next level, they were to be patriotic, to love their country (*ai guo*). Finally, at the top level, a Communist belief system was to be fostered, along with a willingness to work for socialism. At present, compliance at all three levels is expected only of Party members; those outside the Party need only reach the first two levels.

To some extent, as Table 6 revealed, the separation of patriotism from a Communist belief system was congruent with the views of university students after 1986. The same table, however, suggested that even the ideal of patriotism was in decline by 1988. Indeed, given the extensive participation by university students in the 1989 "turmoil," and their widespread desire to study and remain abroad, it appears that the renewed stress on patriotism as part of the foundation of moral education has been aimed particularly at the presumably less jaded primary and secondary school students. But the regime faces an uphill struggle, at least at the high school level.

33. Li Yongjian, "Gaoxiao daxuesheng dangyuan fazhan gongzuo de diaocha yu sikao" ("Investigating and thinking deeply about Party recruitment work among university students"), *Hubei chengshi dangjian* (*Urban Party Construction in Hubei*), No. 1 (January 1992), pp. 18–19. Among other reports, see *Nanfang qingshaonian yanjiu* (*Research on Youth in the South*), No. 2 (1991), pp. 42–47 for reports from colleges in Guandong, Guangxi, Jiangsu and Jiangxi; and, more generally, *Daxuesheng* (*University Student*), No. 6 (June 1991), pp. 44–45.

34. *FBIS-CHI*, 29 August 1990, pp. 10–11 (*Renmin ribao*, 24 August); Joint Publications Research Service (JPRS), 90-050, 12 July 1990, pp. 1–3 (*Qiushi*, 1 May).

Fortunately, data from surveys conducted after 4 June can be used to address this question.

It appears that the most extensive survey of high school students conducted and made openly available after Tiananmen was carried out in May 1990. The 13 cities included in the survey were Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Shenyang, Qingdao, Xiamen, Guangzhou, Wuhan, Chengdu, Xi'an, Zhengzhou, Nanning and Guiyang. Questionnaires were received from 11,647 students at key and non-key schools, academic and vocational schools, as well as junior and senior highs. In addition, questionnaires were collected from 1,000 teachers, 1,100 parents and 200 principals. Data was also gathered from extensive interviews and seminars with informants. A preliminary analysis of the results were published as a book, jointly edited by the education bureau of the Central Committee's Propaganda Department and the Central Institute of Educational Research.[35] This reveals much of interest, including regional variations, and the development of distinct behavioural patterns and subcultures by new strata generated under the reforms, such as the private entrepreneurs.

One finding that emerges clearly throughout the study is the role of television as the primary influence on youth. Of those surveyed, 92.2 per cent lived in households with television sets. Surprisingly, 11.8 per cent of the families also had VCRs. On average, students watched television over an hour a day, with 22 per cent watching more than two hours a day. As many as 83.1 per cent watched television every day. In contrast, the role of the schools in providing moral education was found to be seriously deficient. For example, 46.6 per cent of the students seldom or never participated in activities organized by school organizations. Only 25.3 per cent felt that guidance from the school had been a great help to them; indeed, only 15 per cent of the teachers thought that the school's guidance had been very good.

After establishing the importance of television, films and videos in the lives of the students, the authors noted two particularly interesting phenomena in their viewing habits. First, of least interest were programmes about the country's reforms; only 5.4 per cent of the students liked them. Most favoured were thrillers and detective stories (65.1 per cent), martial arts films (47 per cent), animated cartoons (40.9 per cent) and well-known works which had been adapted (36.1 per cent). Secondly, the students preferred foreign, Hong Kong and Taiwan programmes. Dubbed foreign shows were favoured by 47.4 per cent; Hong Kong and Taiwan shows appealed to 44.9 per cent; while domestic programmes appealed to only 6.6 per cent. Perhaps it is no surprise, therefore, that the second most popular book among students was Sidney Sheldon's *Jiaruo mingtian lailin* (*If Tomorrow Comes*).

Rather similar results were found with respect to music, with Hong

35. *Shehui wenhua shenghuo yu zhongxue deyu diaocha wenji* (*A Collection of Surveys on Social and Cultural Life and Moral Education in High Schools*) (Beijing: Renmin daxue chubanshe, 1990).

Kong and Taiwan songs most popular. For example, a survey of 234 third year junior high students in Beijing found that 84.5 per cent liked Hong Kong and Taiwan singers; when they listed their favourite songs, 20 of the 30 scoring highest were from Hong Kong or Taiwan. Thirty per cent of the students often listened to foreign music.

The surveyors saw the unbalanced emphasis by the students on Western and Hong Kong/Taiwan culture as a cause of ideological confusion and a contributing factor to the growth of "national nihilism," the estrangement of the students from their national culture, and the decline of patriotism. In popular books and films, Chinese domestic products trailed behind imports. In a survey of key school students, it was found that in some schools not a single student liked domestic films. Only 6.4 per cent liked domestically-produced literary works. Perhaps most disturbing to the investigators, of the 745 key school students in Beijing who filled out questionnaires, 21 per cent listed a country other than China as their favourite.

Other studies on student values and ideals have also revealed an interest in things foreign and some very practical concerns. For example, moral educators have admitted, and criticized, the fact that "many children worship imported goods and foreign technology." One example of this is a survey which showed that if they were to buy a television, nearly 75 per cent of children would prefer one manufactured abroad. This is seen as unpatriotic, not as a pursuit of higher quality products.[36] A study of graduating seniors at 40 key schools in a wide variety of cities, including Shenyang, Fuzhou, Tianjin and Chongqing found that the greatest desire (selected by 85 per cent of the students) was to study abroad. Second choice (80 per cent) was to go into business.[37]

There are also many studies on the consumption patterns of students. A survey of how 1,000 students at a university in south China used their scholarship money revealed that 47 per cent treated guests to dinner; 10 per cent bought high-priced cigarettes; 24 per cent bought fashionable clothes; 6 per cent gave gifts to their parents; and only 4 per cent used it for study-related purposes.[38] Another survey covering several universities found that, on average, students spent 159 *yuan* a month, which is more than the monthly salary they would receive upon graduation. Almost 10 per cent had bought an item of clothing costing between 100 and 200 *yuan*; 33 per cent had purchased rings or other jewellery; and 45 per cent were smokers.[39]

Perhaps the most revealing report on the new relationship between students and the authorities succinctly addressed the link between a

36. As reported in "Moral education," *China News Analysis*, No. 1441 (15 August 1991), p. 3.

37. Ming Ping, "Zhongguo rencai reng zai jiju wailiu" ("Chinese talent is still rapidly flowing out"), *Jingbao yuekan* (*The Mirror*), No. 6 (June 1991), p. 33.

38. From *Daxuesheng*, No. 8 (August 1991), as reported in Wang Xiyou, "Beijing dang'an" ("Beijing file"), *Jiushi niandai* (*The Nineties*), No. 10 (October 1991), p. 73.

39. From *Shoudu jingji xinxi bao* (*Economic Information News from the Capital*), reported in *Jiushi niandai*, No. 10 (October 1991).

declining regime-sponsored patriotism and the rising appeal to materialism. It noted that in the past, anniversary days such as 5 April (1976), 4 May (1919) and 9 December (1935) were occasions to celebrate the patriotism and contributions of students to building a new, socialist China. Since the 1986 student demonstrations, however, they had become days of anxiety and concern over probable unsponsored student activities. The report describes how in 1987 and 1988, just prior to each of these "sensitive days," one locality issued 10 *yuan* subsidies to each college student. Instead of treating the money as an indication of the authorities' concern, the students felt that it showed that their past "extreme behaviour" (*pianji xingwei*) had been reasonable. It also stimulated them to store up their grievances until just before the anniversary days, at which point they would let them all out. Thus, the report argued, the local authorities had unintentionally fuelled exactly the kind of turmoil they had tried to buy off.[40]

This is typical of the difficult decisions which must be made by political cadres. They are constrained on the one hand by the imperatives of a strict Party line, and on the other by a student body unreceptive to their teachings. Their attempts to balance these forces has at times led to tragicomic results. Consider the case of perhaps China's most famous moral educator, Li Yanjie, director of the Research Institute of Youth for the Art of Education at Beijing Teachers' College and a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. In January 1988 he led a small group to address youth in Shekou, in the Shenzhen special economic zone. The resulting "Shekou storm," in which Li and his colleagues clashed with Shekou's young entrepreneurs over the relationship between spiritual and material civilization, led to an extensive discussion in China's major newspapers. *Renmin ribao* alone published 35 letters – out of thousands received – between 15 August and 16 September 1988.[41] Li's reputation was further damaged in spring and summer 1989 when he reportedly donated 50 *yuan* to the students on hunger strike, but later covered himself by donating 200 *yuan* to the army after 4 June.

While Li's high visibility is atypical, discussions on the difficulties faced by political work cadres and surveys documenting their unhappiness and desire to transfer to other work are common in the Chinese press.[42] Many consider such positions as "temporary work"

40. Xie Mingdun, "Dangdai daxuesheng pianji xingwei de guiyin fenxi jiqi yufang" ("An analysis of the extreme behaviour of contemporary university students and how to prevent it"), *Qingnian yanjiu*, No. 2 (February 1991), pp. 19–25, at p. 22.

41. Many of the major points are covered in Ma Licheng (ed.), *Shekou fengbo* (*The Shekou Storm*) (Beijing: Zhongguo xinwen chubanshe, 1989). When I interviewed Li in Beijing in August 1992 he was still very bitter about the incident, claiming that the true story has never been reported and that local Shenzhen news organizations had deliberately distorted his argument.

42. One such extensive survey is discussed in Stanley Rosen, "Political education and student response: some background factors behind the 1989 Beijing demonstrations," *Issues and Studies*, No. 10 (October 1989), pp. 12–39.

(*linshi gong*). A study of the 38 full-time CYL cadres at 13 Liaoning universities found only three (7.8 per cent) were content to do ideo-political work. Another survey in Liaoning's Benxi city found that over 90 per cent of officials who resigned were political work cadres.[43] With the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, followed by Deng Xiaoping's talks during his trip to the south in early 1992, the prestige of political work has been further undermined. There has been a widely reported "sense of loss," with political workers complaining that "spring is over and winter has come."[44]

While most studies lament the decline of morality and the need for enhanced moral education, only a few discuss the concrete measures which have been adopted to solve the problem. To take one example, Yangpu district in Shanghai began a programme in June 1989 to reward students who were morally outstanding by promoting them without examination to junior or senior high. In addition, some junior high students – 72 in all – were given eight extra "moral points" they could use for entrance to key senior highs. Twenty students entered municipal or district key senior highs because of this advantage.[45]

Conclusion and Prospects

The evidence presented in this study suggests that the programmes designed to re-educate and instil regime-sponsored values among Chinese youth have not and will not succeed. The state's loss of authority has simply gone too far. Where the Chinese government has been effective, however, is in controlling actual behaviour. This has not been accomplished through normative appeals to be patriotic or accept socialism as the only road for China, but by rather cruder measures such as controlling job assignments and deciding which university graduates will be allowed to remain in Beijing. In a short-term sense, this is a step forward for the CCP. They have regained some of the control over rewards and punishments which had been lost as a result of successful market reforms before 4 June.

The more interesting question is whether the CCP can continue to pursue its Dengist reform strategy without precipitating renewed student unrest. Can economic development be separated from political change? Of course, Deng's emphasis on rapid economic

43. Lin Longfei, "Shilun qingnian sixiang zhengzhi gongzuo de zhanlue" ("A preliminary discussion of the strategy of those who do ideo-political work on youth"), *Qingnian yanjiu*, No. 10 (October 1990), pp. 25–29.

44. *FBIS-CHI*, 3 August 1992, pp. 25–26 (*Ban yue tan*, 25 June 1992); Pan Ke, "Dongou jubian xiahuai malie jiaoshou" ("The dramatic changes in Eastern Europe cause professors of Marxism–Leninism to be overcome with fear"), *Jingbao yuekan*, January 1992, pp. 49–51.

45. Gong Wenxiang, Zhou Shanfu and Liao Dahai, "Biaozhunhua, chengxuhua, gongkaihua" ("Standardization, orderliness, openness"), *Shanghai jiaoyu* (*Shanghai Education*) (middle school edition), No. 5 (May 1990), pp. 11–12.

reform is risky. He has apparently concluded that the long-term continuation of China's political system and the rule of the CCP depend on the generation of wealth. The determination of whether a policy is socialist, as Deng noted on his recent trip, reduces to three criteria: is it conducive to the development of the productive forces, to the growth of the comprehensive national strength of the state, and to the enhancement of the people's living standards (*sange you li*)?[46]

Deng's initiatives have already had some impact on ideo-political work. Interviewees engaged in moral and political education note the reduction of ubiquitous warnings against "peaceful evolution" and the endless debates over whether a given policy is socialist or capitalist. Although it might take some time for political education texts to reflect the new line, the interviewees noted that the main impact in the classroom was further to separate economics from politics. Internally circulated (*neibu*) journals for ideo-political workers have already adopted the new criteria. Admitting that distinguishing between capitalism and socialism has become very complex, the journals seek to comfort the confused by pointing out that so long as "the economy is still largely publicly owned," "political power is still in our hands," and "our minds remain clear," non-socialist economic forms can be used boldly.[47] Recent suggestions by Deng that those engaging in scientific work need not believe in socialism and articles in the official press urging an end to political study sessions in work units represent a continuation of this trend.[48]

Moreover, even before Deng's trip, the strategy of encouraging economic experimentation while discouraging political reform had clearly influenced the behaviour of students and intellectuals. There was a perceptible shift in popular majors by the late 1980s, exacerbated further by the government's suspicion of social science after 4 June. Much of the shift, according to interviewees, was not politically motivated but stemmed from the lack of available jobs for those in *wenke* (humanities and social science) majors, and the desire to make money. In 1979 at Beida, for example, 80 students were recruited into the Philosophy Department; by 1991 the number recruited dropped to 20. The most popular courses are related to foreign economic relations and trade. Indeed, as China's conservatives have complained, many excellent students who previously would have chosen science and engineering majors now opt for business-related courses, while "even accomplished scientists and technicians are looking for ways to shift to business."[49] By encouraging

46. See Central Document No. 2 in *FBIS-CHI*, 1 April 1992, pp. 1–7 (*Zhengming*, April 1992).

47. Zhi Xiaohe, "Guanyu xing 'zi' xing 'she' de jidian renshi" ("Some understanding of the surname 'capitalism' and the surname 'socialism'"), *Gaoxiao lilun cankao* (*Theoretical Reference for Higher Education*), No. 5 (May 1992), pp. 40–42.

48. *FBIS-CHI*, 6 July 1992, pp. 24–25 (*Jingbao yuekan*, July 1992); *FBIS-CHI*, 21 August 1992, p. 13 (*Jingji ribao*, 19 August); *FBIS-CHI*, 8 September 1992, p. 40 (*Jingji cankao bao*, 31 August).

49. *FBIS-CHI*, 6 March 1992, pp. 20–22 (*Zhengming*, March 1992).

intellectuals to concentrate on making money, the regime has purchased some breathing room.

The situation at the secondary level, where regime-sponsored values are even less widely held, may likewise contribute to stability. University students arguably are still actively searching for ideals, despite their current pessimism. High school students seem more concerned with immediate gratification. This of course is partly a reflection of age. However, having spent virtually their entire lives during the reform era in an atmosphere devoid of any widely accepted moral compass, during which corruption at all levels of society was widespread, they appear to have few contemporary heroes, apart from popular culture icons.

The difference between university and high school students was reinforced indirectly by an intriguing survey of 2,000 university students in Hangzhou which showed that 76 per cent agreed that ideals are necessary. When asked their own ideals, however, 66 per cent said they did not know what they were; another 20 per cent answered that it was impossible to formulate such ideals; and only 14 per cent responded that they actually had ideals.[50] This belief in the necessity of ideals helps explain why university students can be mobilized to fight against corruption and for democracy; the lack of clearly formulated ideals, however, makes it difficult for them to sustain their commitment, and relatively easy for them to relapse into the kind of aimless behaviour common on university campuses today.

There is evidence, on the other hand, that many secondary school students do not even see the need for ideals. The influence of television, video games and other such stimuli, and the lure of the world outside China, have made moral education extremely difficult, particularly since the gap between classroom political education and their real world experiences has become so large. Moreover, a number of Chinese surveys have shown how students rely almost exclusively on friends and classmates for knowledge and support, while ignoring classroom teachers and political counsellors.[51] Some of the survey data also supports the suggestion that modernization is a homogenizing process of secularization, that Chinese high school students have started to converge with their Western counterparts.

A final note of caution is in order, however. Many of the underlying causes for past campus political activism – poor food, rising prices, corruption, restrictions on freedom and so forth – still remain. In addition, the historical legacy of Party–student relations and the strong temptation to tap into that legacy by leaders whose policies face opposition make it probable that demonstrations will again recur.

50. Ying Hang, "Lun dangdai daxuesheng lixiang renge de jiangou" ("On the establishment of ideals by contemporary university students"), *Zhejiang daxue jiaoyu yanjiu* (*Research on Zhejiang University Education*), No. 1 (March 1990), pp. 17–21.

51. For an example at the university level, see Li Ping, Ou Xiaowei and Hou Hong, "Daxuesheng qunti chutan" ("A preliminary exploration of university student groups"), *Nanfang qingshaonian yanjiu*, No. 2 (1987), p. 39.

On at least four occasions since 1976 (the 5 April Tiananmen Incident, the Democracy Movement of 1978–81, the 1986 and 1989 demonstrations) China's leaders have been directly or indirectly associated with student or youth activism. In the first three cases, the agitation began as a critique of the authoritarian policies of Deng's opponents, while the most recent demonstrations became closely tied to leadership divisions and the succession struggle. As that struggle intensifies, one can expect China's aspiring future leaders to continue to cast both an expectant and wary eye toward the campuses. As the report of a recent national conference on university student attitudes put it, "at present, on the surface, there is comparative stability, but hidden beneath this stability there are many undercurrents, many deep layers of ideological problems which have not yet been solved."[52]

52. Yang Zhong, "'Daxuesheng jiazhiguan, daodeguan, zhengzhiguan pouxi ji duice yanjiu' yantaohui zongshu" ("Summary of a conference on 'the analysis of the sense of values, sense of morality and sense of politics of university students and countermeasures to be taken'"), *Gaojiao xinxi yu tansuo* (*Higher Education Information and Exploration*), No. 4 (10 February 1992), p. 5.