

On Jan. 12, the State Education Committee announced that China's public school teachers had to be paid by the New Year. Most teachers have not been paid *at all* for the past year, and total pay owed them is \$35 million. Many have left teaching altogether, especially in the countryside, and in the cities many have gone to private schools. But whatever the Education Commission's intentions, it has no funds and no ability to force the local authorities to pay the teachers. Prof. William Jenner of Canberra National University told BBC in an interview. The fact is, the state is giving up responsibility for education in rural China. The number of children getting secondary or even primary education has gone down by *one-third* in rural China since the Deng Xiaoping reforms were first initiated, while the number of children has gone up by one-third.

Warnings of troubles to come

In this situation, the national government is making some fast moves, but voices of caution continue to be raised. On Jan. 1, China's new tax and banking policies went into effect, without prior announcement. Within days, there were reports that Deng Xiaoping, at 89 still China's center of power, had appeared in various provinces, to demonstrate that he is still alive and to throw his weight behind the fast-track faction. Hongkong's *Wen Wei Bao*, a known mouthpiece for Beijing, announced that he had appeared on Jan. 1 in Shanghai, the place of his last appearance the year before. The *South China Morning Post* of Hongkong quoted one Chinese official saying that "the central [Communist] Party leadership is faltering and the patriarch fears that radical reforms cannot be implemented without a strong center."

Scientist warns against ecologist 'totalitarianism'

French scientist Haroun Tazieff warned that "ecologist catastrophism" based on a "deification of the earth and nature," could bring about a new Hitlerite "totalitarianism" and foster the murder of millions of poorer, non-white peoples, in an interview in the Paris daily *Le Figaro* on Jan. 4.

Tazieff, who wrote the preface to the book, *The Holes in the Ozone Scare*, and is a leading volcanologist in France, was asked his reaction to the evaluations made by some top meteorologists, who attribute a great and alarming significance to the current bad weather in Europe. Tazieff said that the weather is indeed strange, but it is not abnormal, historically, for the weather to go through some strange patterns.

Tazieff rejected outright the suggestion "that this unruliness is witness to a more important disorder, caused by human industry": "I know nothing about it, and nobody knows anything about it," he said. "There are catastrophists, but I am not one of them. We can talk about a heating up of the climate only insofar as everything is taken into consideration rigorously, by integrating all the measurements of the planet. The majority are happy to observe the climate from France, Switzerland, or Baden-Württemberg."

Science has no 'democratic majority'

As for the supposed majority of scientists who support such theories as the ozone hole or global warming, Tazieff

answered, "I don't know that, in science, the concept of the democratic majority has any usefulness whatsoever—it could even be a major imbecility. We know of too many new hypotheses that are criticized and fought against by a majority of scientists. Because the scientific majority is like all other corporatist majorities, it groups together the mediocre. Without mentioning that quality which the scientists share with, among others, artists—jealousy."

In this connection, Tazieff cited "the case of Professor Benveniste, and his hypothesis on the memory of water. I don't understand anything of what he is doing, I am incapable of taking a position, but that has no importance. What matters, is that they make the worst problems for a scholar of great value, who is proposing a revolutionary discovery. That is typical." Benveniste and his historic experiments with water were the subject of a witchhunting campaign led by *Nature* magazine, which used extraordinarily brutal measures to ostracize him as a fraud.

Asked about the "alarmist manner of speaking" which many environmental researchers often use, Tazieff said: "Alarmism and catastrophism serve to make some people rich, abet their drive for wealth and vanity. But I strongly fear that this is not the whole problem. In the domain of the environment, I suspect that catastrophism is only at the service of a totalitarianism of a new type, based on the new deification of the earth and of nature. I was 19 years old in 1933, and I shall recall until my last day, that the three first laws imposed by Hitler were the three first ecologist laws in the world. I fear that this movement has, as its only tendency, to separate on one side the rich, white-skinned peoples, including in this the Japanese, and on the other side the impoverished, dark-skinned people with the key point being to put millions of human beings to death."

—Mark Burdman