THE DESIGN AND CIRCULATION OF DOMESTIC NEWS IN CHINA 1978 - 1982

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This thesis is the result of original research carried out by myself.

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INTRODUCTION

The West takes its freedom of access to information for granted. Freedom of expression is so ingrained in its society that it is rarely discussed. Freedom of the press is so well understood and accepted by all levels that it is not often questioned. There is occasional speculation that some owners of media outlets report news selectively to influence public perceptions of Governments, and that Government figures themselves sometimes seek favourable media treatment of events to their advantage. Investigative reporting, however, is designed to expose, and the embarrassment of public figures by news reports and media commentaries are sufficiently frequent events to reassure Westerners that their freedoms are alive and well.

Access to news in China is usually quite different from that in the West. In China news is produced and circulated with different expectations and generally under severe and direct Government constraints. This dissertation examines Chinese news, during the period of 1978-1982 which was the beginning of a new era of political change concentrating on economic growth. Analysis of the collection, dissemination and reception of news then, and the influences brought to bear to shape it, leads to a series of conclusions about the basic nature of journalistic practice in the Peoples' Republic of China (PRC).

The news media in the Peoples' Republic of China play a very different role from those in the countries of the West. Differences arise from the cultural and political values which are rooted in Chinese history and in Communist ideology. Freedom of the press in the West has been supposed to be a principle support for the liberty of the individual. Values of the rulers
of China place different priorities on the press and its content of news and opinion.

Liberal democratic values in the West emerged in a competitive, individualist, market society and under the authority of the liberal state through a system of freely competing political parties. In China there was a short period of some exposure to these Western liberal values up until the middle of the twentieth century. When, however, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) took control of the whole country, its members proceeded with great zeal inculcating in the people values including those which originated from the German Marx, and were developed under Russia's Lenin. For a long time these competed with and to some extent replaced traditional Chinese values and Western liberal influences.

Under the authority of the CCP the old social structure was turned upside down and the worker and peasant classes raised to a level where their education and betterment became priorities. Yet Chinese society had settled by the 1980s into another two-class hierarchy - of the leadership and the masses. Certain traditional attitudes toward authority persisted, and the leadership's assumption of its superior knowledge and abilities meant that it made all major decisions and expected the obedient implementation of these by the rest of the populace. Into the 1980s individuals who stood alone or initiated ideas and actions outside the Party structure which constituted the leadership were confronted with "insurmountable difficulties" in the PRC and disciplined harshly. Individuals within the Party structure have alternately won and lost their battles for influence.

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An eminent political scientist wrote that in Chinese theory there was no need for either representation or the politics of interest groups, because if officials studiously adhered to the rules of conduct decreed in the formal ideology they could be confident that they were doing everything possible to ensure justice and fair treatment for all elements of the society. He held that the moral righteousness of government provided an absolute answer to the problems of representation and interest articulation. The ideology of Communism provided Communist Party officials with a similar position. In the PRC the uprightness and correctness of the Party has been continually emphasized and publicized.

There is little evidence to deny Lucien Pye's argument that certain identifiable Chinese characteristics have carried over from the old traditional ideology and practices into the new Communist Party-run state of the PRC. He wrote: "Confucianism and communism in their different ways have sustained this unique Chinese belief in authority's rights to arrogance. Each ideology has dwelt on the rigorous self-discipline expected of officials, on the essence of virtue and wisdom, and on the ultimate importance of the common people; but both have been equally absolute in upholding the monopolies of officialdom." In the PRC the interests and well-being of the people were still assumed to be best guarded by the dutiful actions of the ideologically inspired officials.

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3 ibid., 13
4 ibid., 21
CONTROL OVER NEWS CIRCULATION

In China the exercise of power and authority by the Party was superior to all laws and regulations, as Sun Guohua wrote in the Guangming Daily in February 1979: "Law is based on party policy and is aimed at the thorough implementation of it". All the laws of the PRC have been drafted to reflect Party policy. Party policy included general principles, specific policies and measures. Many laws actually included clauses related to current Party policy. The periodic revision and substantial alteration of contents of laws from the Constitution downwards reflected the fact that law was intended for use in the control of activities. The Party has stressed legal reform and more reliance on rule by law than by arbitrary decision since its Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee in December 1978, but there has been little evidence since then that Sun Guohua's interpretation is not widely held.

Legal restrictions used to justify control of both official and unofficial news circulation ranged from Constitutional stipulations and major State statutes to the Decisions, Directives and Regulations of the Party. Anyone engaged in news circulation between 1978 and 1982 was subject to the laws, regulations and proclamations in force at the time. The controls which applied broadly to all citizens were stated in the stipulations of the State Constitution on the freedoms and responsibilities of citizens of the Peoples' Republic of China. The State Secrets Regulations listed several potentially

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large areas of subject matter which people were not to be permitted to disseminate as news. The Criminal Law and the Counter-Revolutionary Act promised heavy penalties for disseminating news which might contribute to challenge the authority of the Party. All of the above applied to every news disseminator whether he used oral communication, handwritten materials or Party supervised mass media. Examination of changes between the 1978 and 1982 versions of the Constitution pointed to the Chinese authorities' attitude toward independent circulation of important and politically powerful news. Articles on how the offices producing mass media specifically should subject themselves to supervision by the Party authorities were included also in some of the above. Relevant items of legislation are examined in chapters 5 and 6.

The nature of the press in the PRC was determined by the need and desire of the rulers to monopolize and control. They tried to channel all important news, information, and influential opinion about politics, society, the economy, and morality through channels which they controlled. The Chinese Communist Party first took over or closed down newspapers run by its political opponents and those not in sympathy with the Communist cause shortly after 1949.

THE STUDY OF CHINESE NEWS

Several books in the English language have been published about the communications, mass media and propaganda of the Peoples' Republic of China. These works and many papers and articles have generally concentrated on the use and effect of Communist mass media for change within the Chinese nation since 1949. Most of the work which has been done, has concentrated on the active management by the Party of communication channels, and the propagation of Communist beliefs amongst
the populace. The major works in English are: Franklin W. Houn, *To Change A Nation: Propaganda and Indoctrination in Communist China*, 1961; Frederick T.C. Yu, *Mass Persuasion In Communist China*, 1964; Alan P.L. Liu, *Communications and National Integration In Communist China*, 1971; Godwin C. Chu, *Radical Change Through Communication In Mao's China*, 1977. No detailed work has yet been published in the Western world describing and analysing news collection and preparation by journalists in modern China. This dissertation therefore will examine the communication of news rather than concentrate on the propaganda roles of China's mass media.

The above books and many articles published about the Chinese news media prior to the 1980s were limited by a paucity of information about news circulation. Western articles were marked by insufficient knowledge of the offices which produced the newspapers and broadcasts and how they worked. From the documentary evidence available, it seems also that very little was openly published in China on journalism theory and practice until 1978. Internally distributed materials may have been available to the Chinese journalists and editors prior to this period. Very little published information and Chinese discussion of their press and journalism could be read by Western eyes, making it very difficult for previous scholars to examine Chinese attitudes to news and journalism in any depth. Since 1978 it has become easier to investigate these subjects and thus to understand what elements shaped and governed the circulation of news in China.

In December 1978 a major political meeting was held in Beijing - the Third Plenum of the Central Committee of the CCP - that heralded policy changes in many areas. It could be taken to mark the end of an era of highly limited publication of news and information in the mass media of the PRC.
The new leadership of China over the next few years allowed changes in the news media - newspapers, broadcasting and television - in order to regain the acceptance of a disillusioned public. Reforms were instituted to allow inclusion of more news in the official media. Official public newspapers, for example, had for a long time been policy documents and instructional statements rather than media full of news. Radio and television news programming was underdeveloped and primarily broadcast items from the newspapers and the Xinhua News Agency. Since late 1978 more news has been in evidence even while the overt manipulation of the media for the purposes of Party propaganda continued. A meeting of the Party's Propaganda Department in July of 1981 represented a tightening up of Party discipline for the news media. Such Party meetings to reassert political control over too independent news reporting occurred periodically during the 1980s. Meanwhile, increasing foreign contacts of China's political leaders and journalists gradually affected and changed approaches to the operation of China's news media. The early period of 1978-1982, before Western influences could seriously affect the attitudes and practices of domestic Chinese news gathering has been chosen for examination in this dissertation. Thus the author intends to portray the major tenets of the distinctive practice of journalism in the Peoples Republic of China.

CHINESE SOURCES

Much information about the theories and practices of mass media organizations has been published since the Party's Third Plenum. Late in 1978, *Xinwen Zhanxian* (News Front) magazine, a journal containing articles on journalistic issues recommenced publication. This event was shortly followed by the new publications and recommencements of publication of several other journalism magazines and periodicals including
Handbooks written for the training and guidance of journalists, and academic expositions of the roles of news and of its professional transmitters, also began to appear in print. Newly published materials included newspaper articles on matters concerning the press, handbooks for journalists and others working within the media, and academic publications from Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) and the Chinese Peoples' University Department of Journalism. By 1982 annual publication of Chinese Journalism Yearbooks had also commenced. Thus a wealth of information about Chinese journalism had become available. An attached bibliography includes many of these.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s senior people in the Chinese news media went to some lengths to define and to explain what they regarded as news value or newsworthiness. Many books and articles began to appear in print. The most conspicuous academic or semi-academic organizations which looked at questions of journalism in China were the Journalism Department of the Peoples' University, the Fudan University Journalism Department, the Journalism Research Institute of CASS, and the New China News Agency's research arm. After 1978 the authorities in the PRC had re-established, and in some cases newly established, academic organizations to teach and research a wide variety of subjects. A lot of effort went into practical explanation of contemporary Chinese journalism and theorizing about the roles of the news organizations and those people who work within them. Many of those opinions have been considered within this dissertation.

The recent availability of this material makes the present study possible. Only now can an outside observer describe and evaluate in some depth the inner workings of the Chinese media.
CHINESE NEWS OFFICES

In the PRC all news and opinion media, with a few rare exceptions, have been closely supervised by the Party and government leadership. The rule has been that newspaper staffs and broadcasters were controlled by Party or government organizations and directly accountable to them. The work they produced was done for the State. The news media, or rather their offices, have been required to fulfil three major roles: dissemination of news and opinion complementary to the propagation of the Party's policies and its government's programmes, the restricted provision of feedback or intelligence gathered about the feelings and behaviour of the people and the performance of lower-level cadres, and supervision of the bureaucracy of government by public criticism of the shortcomings or errors in implementation of programmes and policies. The media have been an integral part of the apparatus of government and not a separate and independent part of the political life of the nation.

As all newspapers published in China were instruments of government, editors and journalists have had to work for the government with varying degrees of autonomy. Guidelines for selecting, writing and publishing information and comment were made available to journalists. There were two kinds of limitation on what events and thoughts were expressed in the Chinese newspapers. The first kind was the body of theory and practice built up by the Chinese Communists delineating good socialist journalism practice. The second kind was temporal and personal, depending upon the political climate and power structure at the given period when news and views were published. This latter determines editorial policy on subject

matter and affects the performance of news staff. Some of the instructions they received were not available to outsiders. Occasionally, however, selected news items with comment have been published in a form readily accessible to the public and to any foreigner who was interested.

In his recent work on democracy in China, Andrew Nathan simplified the role of the mass media, even in the 1980s, as 'to make sure that citizens know what government policy was and to enlist their cooperation'⁷. With the great expansion in number and variety of newspapers and publications in the 1980s one could argue that there was also a strong inclination to provide the public with a great amount of news and information. The key to understanding the mass media lies in looking at the offices which produce them. For example, one reads Nathan's statement that the media 'criticize individual officials for violating government policy' but that they 'do not dissent from policy itself'. This does not mean that the journalists who produce those media have not attempted to do either. When attempts to 'go public' in the mass media are thwarted by political pressures, the seeds of change in policy may be sown by journalists through their internal reporting role.

THE FIRST THIRTY YEARS

To understand what was printed in the newspapers and broadcast over radio and television requires an appreciation of the role of Chinese reporting policies and methods. News published in the newspapers was not intended to be "impartial". Both emotional persuasion and selective reporting were acceptable means for reaching and convincing the readers. News reports

⁷ ibid., 229.
were supposed to be based on fact but with the emphasis on the social function of the report. News had to be topical in a politically-timed sense. The government attempted to motivate and control the population through the conditioning of people's minds and opinions. The first thirty-odd years of Communist rule were interesting in that a whole new set of values and customs was being taught to a huge population, and one of the means of forcing such changes was through the media - the control and manipulation of information and ideas.

During the early 1970s, the Chinese news media were dominated by the proletarian or mass line of journalism and limited by the few people in ultimate control. From 1978 into the 1980s, control over news and information eased and many Chinese citizens were allowed to go abroad or to study foreign languages and listen to foreign broadcasts. With the maturation of the rule of the CCP over China during a period of thirty years there was a growing confidence that allowed some issues to be discussed publicly. There had been time for either elimination or assimilation of many of those people who did not fit into the new political and economic scheme. The Chinese domestic media in 1979 reflected changes in propaganda and information policies, and some liberalization of reporting occurred when new people took control of the media. The changes, however, came about within the limits and definition of modern Chinese journalism under the CCP-run government.

THE JOURNALIST

"Professional ethics" for news workers were set out as eight points, with commentary, in a volume produced by the Journalism Research
Institute of CASS in 1983 and published for unrestricted consumption. A set of Rules, distributed only to insiders, make the journalist's role as a State cadre quite clear. The Rules made clear: his position as a cadre or bureaucrat serving the political authority; his understanding, compliance with and public interpretation of the ruling philosophy of the political masters; the need for a wide background knowledge of many subjects he might write about, and skills at presenting reports both for the authorities and for the less aware and knowledgeable public. The journalist was expected to be proficient in political knowledge and skills, and professionally competent as an accurate and persuasive writer.

Chinese journalists faced communal responsibilities for directing the masses of people toward common goals. The Chinese Communist Party took over control of China in 1949 with aims defined by its ideology and practice not to permit competition of political views and actions but to order certain changes in the political and economic structure. Like a religious or atheistic group sure of its own prescriptions for change and betterment, after a struggle against other political forces, the Communist Party set about persuading and bending everyone else to its will. The journalism cadres and the government-appointed editor-comrades turned the news media to the service of the Party's goals and interests and have sought to maintain control of the media ever since. Like other government and Party officials, and like the scholar-official elite of earlier Chinese societies, these news cadres maintain the uprightness and correctness of their position by their formal

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8 Dai Bang, Qian Xinbo, Lu Huimin, Lectures on Basic Knowledge for News Study, 1983, vol 1, 105-111

political and professional training and continual self-improvement and self-cultivation. The qualities thus engendered endow them with the moral justification, right or responsibility for being the sole disseminators through mass communication media of information and views. Considering the large numbers of people reached and influenced by mass communications media, those who exercise the decision-making powers in the daily production of newspapers and broadcasts wield considerable power in Chinese society.

NEWS REFORM AND ITS LIMITS

After the end of 1978, attempts were made through news reform to bring news back into the newspapers. This was to be achieved by emphasizing the professional system of news gathering and circulation of news, over propaganda. The lessening of ideological content in the media, allowing more information to be available through the public mass media to citizens, was a positive and important step in the development of PRC political, social, and economic life. It was also an indication that the current government recognised the sophistication of the Chinese domestic audiences and their inclinations to search for new information outside the Party's mass media. The media had to become more factual and believable for otherwise Chinese citizens would find their news and views elsewhere thus leading to an erosion of the Party's authority.

In October 1979 the New China News Agency published a booklet containing its best selected news items from 1978 with comments upon political usefulness and other admired qualities of the articles. The Peoples' Daily Publishing House in October 1980 published the six best 1979 news items selected from newspapers throughout China with commentary. Such examples of good Chinese journalism reflect the standards and nature of quality newswriting in China in the 1978-1982 period.
From 1978 to 1981 distinct changes in the styles and news content of the major newspapers in China could be identified. There were, however, many limits to reform. The propaganda role of the press was never completely discarded during the period under examination. The tensions between provision of news and the Party's requirements of journalists to participate in its propaganda are a theme which recurs throughout the pages that follow.
CHAPTER ONE: DEFINITION OF NEWS

News in China after 1978 was officially seen as a very important part of newspaper production and of broadcasting. Several Chinese writers expounded their definitions of news which suited both the political and practical roles newspapers and news offices had to fulfil. This chapter addresses the concept of news and deals briefly with its place in propaganda, as seen by Chinese writers of the time.

Two markedly different definitions of news appeared in the 1979 and 1981 editions of the Cihai dictionary. These reflected the disparity in attitude of the politically conservative writers and those who sought to define news as a concept distinct from immediate requirements of propaganda. During this time of debate and reform journalism experts discussed the potential usages of controlled circulation of news, and its relationship to propaganda. Various broad Western concepts of news, information and intelligence are introduced to highlight Chinese concepts and indicate aspects of their universality. The observations and arguments in this chapter are intended to show news in a broad context which can be extended to reveal news circulation in China in all its variety. Clarifying the concepts of news is a necessary preparation for a realistic examination of the work of the modern Chinese newspaper offices and assessment of news content in the public media.

In 1978-1979 in China, the word xinwen (news) was generally associated with the products of organizations such as newspaper offices, broadcasting stations, and news agencies which produced news reports and other designed messages for large public audiences. The 1979 edition of the authoritative Chinese dictionary Cihai, defined xinwen (news) narrowly as: "...reports made by news organizations of current political and social
events"1. Debate amongst practising journalists and teachers of journalism, from the late 1970s into the early 1980s, included trying to define xinwen more broadly. Various authors expressed dissatisfaction with the limited concept that only news communicated through mass media should be classed as news2. Some were particularly concerned that journalists and editors understood news as new information distinct from other messages. The history of journalism in the PRC until this period was very much that of Chinese propaganda cadres communicating some new information amongst what they considered to be more important messages3. Times changed in 1978 with the formation of a new leadership under Deng Xiaoping. The new policies of these leaders required changes in the mass media.

If news is defined simply as new information then it is not, and never has been, only what is carried in the mass media such as newspapers and broadcast media. Within every society news circulates through more than one channel. In China, important news travelled through at least four identifiable channels during the period 1978-1982. The mass media produced by official newspaper offices and broadcasting stations for public consumption were only one type of news channel. Another influential

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1 Cihai, 1979, Vol 3. The remainder of the definition of news reads:'...(It) must be swift and timely, true, clear and concise, speaking through facts. The forms include xiaoxi, tongxun, specialist writing, correspondence from journalists, investigatory reports, news photographs and television news. News is imbued with a strong class character. Proletarian news must correctly reflect objective reality, propagate the lines, guiding principles, policies and tactics of the Marxist political party, for instructing the correct struggles'.

2 These included particularly the academics in Shanghai led by Professor Wang Zhong. They were powerful enough to have their views incorporated when the new definition of news was prepared for the 1981 Cihai.

3 An article by James Chu in 1975 was a fair depiction of the PRC journalist’s role - as a political or government cadre rather than as a member of a distinct journalistic profession. See Chu, James C.Y., 'The PRC Journalist as a Cadre' in Current Scene, Vol III, No 11, November 1975, 1-14.
conduit was the internal news bulletin produced within those same offices solely for the eyes of Party and government leaders. Both of these news media will be examined in detail in later chapters. A further route through which news travelled was the Chinese Communist Party's system of neibu chuanda (internal transmission) via meetings and reports to junior Party members and officials and sometimes to groups of citizens. There also existed xiaodao xiaoxi⁴ (gossip), a highly developed and reliable system of unofficial news circulation via the 'little roads'. Important news was thus spread in an unorganized fashion through networks of personal contacts. "Reports made by news organizations" applies as a definition only to the news communicated through the first and second of these channels⁵. Much news (new information) of political import was communicated through both "internal transmission" and xiaodao xiaoxi, as borne out by reports in the mass media criticizing unofficial circulation and pointing to leakage of "secrets".

CHINESE TERMS FOR NEWS

It is important to understand the meaning of words used for news by Chinese journalists and academic experts on journalism. Several words are frequently translated from Chinese into English as news: xinwen, tongxun, xiaoxi and xinxi. The fourth term xinxi (information), approximated news as simply new information. It was not much used as a concept in news circles prior to 1982, when some authors started seriously

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⁴ Translated by some as "little road news"

⁵ Those routes will be discussed in depth in chapter four.
to examine it and other commonly used Western terms. Therefore it will not be discussed in this dissertation.

The first three terms were often used in association with formats used in official newspapers and broadcasts of news reports. Xinwen is a general term used broadly for news, while tongxun and xiaoxi are usually employed to denote specific written formats which appear in a modern PRC newspaper. The tongxun is a longer and more detailed news report while xiaoxi can be a few short lines of unembellished fact.

Xiaoxi has also been used often to denote verbally circulated news in a general way as well as written news. The "little road news" which includes important political news communicated informally is referred to as a kind of xiaoxi, xiaodao xiaoxi. When used in the context of xiaodao (little roads), the tone is disparaging. This is perhaps due to a formalistic way of thinking and to the earlier usage of xiaodao to refer to inferior studies and employments.

Xiaoxi is probably the closest of those three words to the general and universal concept of news which encompasses all forms from personal channels to newspaper or mass broadcast news. In all dictionaries, the word xiaoxi refers to a written news form the characteristics of which are brevity and factual content. Xiaoxi is an item of news which does not deliberately employ written techniques designed or calculated to persuade. Xinwen, generally used for news reporting in the writings and debates of Chinese authorities, should be distinguished from xiaoxi denoting simple factual

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6 Even in 1988, questioning of senior Chinese journalists revealed that they were not in the habit of using the word xinxi.
news which most approximates an idea of communicating news and facts simply to inform people.

INTELLIGENCE

There is a further term used for news or information generally in China. It is qingbao, which approximates the English term 'intelligence'. The Xiandai Hanyu Cidian (Contemporary Chinese Dictionary), in both its internally circulated version of 1973 and its public version of 1983, defines qingbao as: "xiaoxi (news) or baogao (reports) of certain qingkuang (situations), having more of a secret nature".

Professor Wang Zhong used the term qingbao (intelligence) several times in his comprehensive article discussing the origin and usage of the word xinwen (news). Of intelligence he wrote: "This 'news' is not the sheer nonsense of gossip, but is the qingbao (intelligence) which had been sealed off by the official establishment and was gleaned through circuitous enquiry. He also deduced that in the understanding of Chinese for centuries xinwen (news) was of at least three kinds, one being the "qingbao (intelligence) [gathered from] all quarters". He also at one point defined the terms in the inverted order, that xinwen news "is a form of qingbao (intelligence)". It appears that in the years prior to 1978

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7 entry for xiaoxi in Hanyu Yilei Cidian 1987 lists qingbao as a meaning for xiaoxi.


10 ibid., 11.

11 ibid., 11-12.

12 ibid., 15.
qingbao (intelligence) was associated in peoples’ minds with secrecy or clandestine activities. Subsequently, the term has become somewhat demystified concurrently with the changes in the Chinese political atmosphere.

In dealing with the concept of intelligence it should be noted that in standard English, news and intelligence have been used interchangeably. Over the centuries, depending on circumstances of war or peace, openness or secrecy, intelligence has meant simply information or news, or a means of obtaining secret information. Intelligence is a concept which is blurred within China where, as will be seen in Chapter Four, it is frequently difficult to pinpoint what exactly is supposed to be kept secret and from whom. In that chapter, intelligence newly acquired by journalists and passed through the newspaper offices to government leaders will be considered also as news.

NEWS AS NEW INFORMATION

The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary provides the following simple definition for news: New information of recent events; new occurrences as a subject of report or talk. Though at first glance rather obvious, such a simple and broad definition of news is the key to appreciating the variety of news circulating in the PRC. It provides a means of appreciating news

13 Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, 1973 defines intelligence as (fr 1450) information, news, tidings; (1697) The obtaining of secret information; the secret service (latter definition revived in modern wars). A dictionary of modern English language usage describes intelligence: "In a restricted sense it is the collecting of secret information about an enemy or a suspected person or organization, as by political police, a government agency, or military authorities". It also refers to intelligence as the "information or facts collected". See Use The Right Word (A Modern Guide To Synonyms), Readers' Digest, 1969, 391.

circulation in a society where mass media have not always existed as well-developed news providers.

In this dissertation news will be regarded specifically as new information independent of the judgments and opinions made about the events which are the subject of a news report or other forms of its presentation. News may be frequently found amongst other material as was suggested above in a brief discussion of newspaper editorials, so for clarity it must be assumed that news is a distinct substance. Whether or not the persons reporting or circulating the news make this distinction is irrelevant for the purposes of this analysis. Similarly, news should not be regarded as public opinion or propaganda but as a component of such influential communications between humans.

News is a universal concept not confined to a particular culture, polity or society. News is identifiable as something of which the receiver has not previously been aware. Using the above arguments, news is simply facts or information. Thus it is similar to intelligence because no qualification has been made yet as to how the news is gathered or whether someone intended its circulation to be limited for secret purposes.

Some Chinese academic writers on journalism have tried to identify news as a distinct entity and then discuss what role news should play in official newspapers. Between 1978 and 1983, Gan Xifen of the Chinese Peoples' University, researchers at the Chinese Institute of Journalism Research in Beijing, and experts in Shanghai, such as Wang Zhong, Lu Yunfan and Ge Chiyin, all published expositions on the nature of news and its dissemination. Strong indications of the breadth of thought and of the debate going on at the time are reflected in these writings, and some of the
conclusions reached represent efforts to address news as an entity distinct from the appearance which some Party politicians prefer it to assume.

COMMUNICATION OF NEWS

Chinese authors, while specifically addressing the news gathering and writing activities of the news organizations, were well aware of the potential influence of the other channels. Some, therefore, addressed the basic characteristics of news which distinguished it from other messages contained in any human communication. When the first edition of the professional magazine for journalists and editors in and around Shanghai appeared in May 1981, it contained a significant and major article on the definition of news. Wang Zhong, a Fudan University professor who had broad thinking and great perception, wrote "On News" in Xinwen Daxue (News University). In it he examined the word xinwen and its various uses in China as far distant as the Tang and Song dynasties. In doing so, he argued that news existed independently of the product designed and manufactured by modern journalists and editors working in twentieth century newspaper offices and broadcasting stations.

The 1981 Cihai entry on xinwen, drafted under the supervision of journalism professor Wang Zhong, begins with a statement of this basic character of news. The first statement is very similar to the basic definition of news found in the English Shorter Oxford dictionary.

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Cihai reads: The chuanbu (circulation) of facts of recent changes.16

One Shanghai writer, Ge Chiyin, wrote an article in the professional journal News University examining the differences between the 1981 entry for news and entries published in previous editions of the Cihai.17 He argued in defence of the more general definition of news, and against the commonly held misconception within China that news was only a creation of modern news organizations.

Ge Chiyin explained that the whole picture of news circulation (within China) could be appreciated better if news were defined as matter chuanbu (circulated) rather than as matter just baodao (reported). The word report was specifically associated in peoples' minds only with that news which appeared in the public mass media. Prior to the publication of the 1981 dictionary excerpt, according to the entries quoted in Ge Chiyin's article, the word chuanbu (circulate) had not been used. Each previous attempt at definition had concentrated on the baodao (reporting) of news by news offices - into newspapers, news agency dispatches, and the bulletins of broadcasting stations. The 1979 version included also some explanation of what formal political role this type of public reporting was intended to achieve.18 Apparently, the nearest which the 1965 or 1979 definitions came

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16 Cihai Fence (The Culture and Sports Part), 1981. The remainder of the definition reads: "...It emerged from the needs of people in social activity to understand and to link up the circumstances. Following on the development of productive forces and the growth of news needs, the social professions of engaging in the gathering and circulation of news appeared. News gradually became the propaganda medium for all kinds of political forces and social groupings; in the society of production and exchange of commodities, news is also a commodity".

17 Ge Chiyin, "Du 'Cihai' santiao xinwen cimu de jizhang shiwen" in XWDX, no. 4, September 1982, 8-12. He also included the 1965 Cihai definition which differed from that of the two abovementioned.

18 see note 1.
to including a broad definition of circulation of news was the addition that *xinwen* also meant: "new affairs made the topic of conversation", a concession to the historical origin of the word. In the 1981 version the word *baodao* (report) was absent altogether.

Lu Yunfan, of Fudan University, also argued for the replacement of *baodao* (report), which had apparently been used by Party official Lu Dingyi, with the word *chuanbo* (circulate). The quotation which most writers refer to is "Materialists believe that the origin of news is in material things and therefore facts, the facts which occur in the battle of mankind with nature and in social battle. Thus, the definition of news is the *baodao* (reporting) of recently occurred facts". It had originally appeared in an article by Lu Dingyi called "Our Fundamental View of Journalism" in the *Liberation Daily* in 1943.

The domestic communication of news in China by either report or some other means of circulation depends upon the degree of formality. Distinct news items which are found in the newspapers and other mass media could be termed news reports or news stories. Those *xinwen* *baodao* (news stories) are different from news *baogao* (reported). The word story, in English, can be used to "designate any report of article...in the world of newspaper and magazine journalism". News can be *baogao*

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20 1/9/43.
21 Use The Right Word (A Modern Guide To Synonyms), Readers' Digest, 1969, 493. Story: "some degree of scepticism is commonly associated with this. [It] may even be used to suggest a conscious distortion of the truth. [It] may, however, simply mean a person's version of an incident, and need not imply the motive of conscious deception".
either internally from newspaper offices, or not in any sense of
news journalism but in formal baogao (reports) made within a working
situation or Party meetings. Baogao (report) is the "formal telling of affairs
or opinions to higher levels or to the masses", according to standard Chinese
dictionaries. It is not restricted to usage outside news offices since reports
made prior to publication or internal restricted distribution are baogao
(reports) of news rather than xinwen baodao (news stories).

In the further channel of circulation of news informally and
unofficially, when xiaoxi is passed on by individuals or 'the masses', one
could say that an account of the news is being given. Accounts might be
taken up by formal news collectors, journalists for example, and turned into
baodao (stories) or simply included in a baogao (report) formally
presented to superiors. Accounts of news, news reports, and news stories
could all be said to be spread to other people or to be circulated.

Circulation covers a wide variety of activities and includes all instances
of new information communication which occur in the Peoples' Republic of
China. The word chuanbo, translated into English variously as
disseminate, spread, transmit and even propagate, in this dissertation is

22 Both usages of the word report are of a formalized transmission of information, usually
new. Apart from report for news "reports" in formal and public news media, report can
in English also mean "an official or formal statement, often made after an investigation
and usually by a subordinate to his superior". (ibid. 493) The work of English usage Use
the Right Word also expounds the meaning of report thus: "an authoritative finding, often
based on interpretation and deliberation of evidence".

23 Xiandai Hanyu Cidian.

24 An account, according to Use The Right Word, is a"factual statement of events or
conditions, usually given by an eyewitness". The example is cited of a farmer giving an
"account" of a plane crash and a government department drawing up a "report" based on
that news. 493.
being used in the widest sense of spreading or circulation. Chuanbo\textsuperscript{25} (circulate) and chuanbu (circulate) are both used in Chinese writings in a similar sense. If the Chinese dictionaries are relied upon, the sense of transmit is commonly applied to such situations as transmission of disease. It is more appropriate when looking at news to translate chuanda\textsuperscript{26} as transmission, as in the context of ting chuanda baogao (the listening to reports transmitted or relayed internally). Propagate could apply to information and messages containing information, but this meaning will be dealt with under the separate heading of propaganda rather than news.

Wang Zhong's writings and the definition of news in the 1981 Cihai entry appear to have been constructed in order to widen and somewhat depoliticize the concept of news in readers' minds.

His readers were intended mostly to be journalists and people working formally in the news industries. The Cihai dictionary, however, was intended for more general influence on citizens and leaders in China through intellectual explanation and finally authoritative adoption. News defined apart from what the Party expected Chinese journalists to do with news publicly, allowed journalists to appreciate news in its broad context and thus approach their work as professional news gatherers and disseminators distinctly identifiable from other Party cadres.

\textsuperscript{25} \textit{guangfan sanbu}: extensive diffusion. See Hanyu Yilei Cidian, 221-222.

\textsuperscript{26} chuanda is explained as the "telling of one's yisi ideas to another" often in the context of transmitting an order or transmitting a report, often downwards from an authority, in Hanyu Yilei Cidian. The Xiandai Hanyu Cidian also refers to the chuanda transmission of instructions zhishi by the next highest level.
News can therefore be identified and extracted from other material which often accompanies it when passed on. News is passed on in messages between human beings.

GENERAL MEANS OF NEWS CIRCULATION

Several of the Chinese writers on journalism have indicated their awareness of alternate forms of news circulation. A number of foreign authors have also touched on this subject, both circulation of domestic news and of foreign news. It is preferable to divide those specific means, by which news was passed on in China independently of journalists, into three categories: informal news circulated orally through one's personal network of relatives, colleagues and contacts; big character posters which were used officially and independently; and the internal transmission which is semi-official and involves Party authorities deliberately transmitting news.

Lu Yunfan, a teacher of journalism in the Chinese Peoples' University, pointed out that new information which is chuanbo (circulated) by and amongst the masses, even if not reported in the mass media, was news. He apparently needed to emphasize this because prominent authorities and 'news

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27 Those who mentioned alternate news communication ranged from the politically conservative lecturer from the Chinese Peoples' University, Gan Xifen, to the more independent thinkers in Shanghai like Wang Zhong and Ge Chiyin.

workers' in the PRC previously had concentrated exclusively on describing only that news reported by news organizations.29

Ge Chiyin, in his article commenting on the Cihai, reminded his readers that oral news communication and informal written forms co-existed with that reported by readily identifiable news organizations. He mentioned that news of the 'downfall of the Gang of Four' in October 1976 was qunzhong dajia xianghu chuangao (circulated extensively by everyone) before xinwen jigou (news organizations) baodao (reported it)30 to the public. He also pointed out that both good news and bad news generally was circulated widely amongst the masses.

Operating simultaneously with the mass media were other channels of news circulation. According to Lu Yunfan these chuanbo de fangshi (means of dissemination) included such media as telephone conversations, telegrams and letters.31 (This was before the age of widely available facsimile machines and photocopiers). Dai Bang and other researchers at the Journalism Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences32 also referred to these along with jietou hangwei jianghua (talking in the streets and lanes). They remarked that news in the broader sense included the xinxi de chuanbo (spreading of new information)33 even through the contents of gaoshi (official notices) which people might see while travelling.

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30 Ge Chiyin, "Du 'Cihai' santiao xinwen cimu de jizhong shiwen" in XWDX, vol 4, 9.
31 Lu Yunfan, op cit, 22.
32 The Institute was established in 1978.
33 xinxi is a term introduced in the 1980s from the West.
along the roads. Work reports and speeches at political party meetings could also be said to have been means of news dissemination.

Talking, whether to small or large audiences, privately circulated roneoed sheets and sheets copied by hand, were used by some people in the PRC to spread news. Through travel and written correspondence, people also passed on news of recent events in areas beyond the limits of their society. Informal personal communications such as those above are the simplest forms of news circulation which operate in all societies at all levels. They should never be dismissed as unimportant.

Ge Chiyin mentioned that people learned news from the regular activities of **ting baogao** (listening to reports) and the **neibu chuanda** (internal transmission) which were practised by the Communist Party in China. Michel Oksenberg addressed various forms of internal news transmission in China in some detail in his article "Methods of Communication within the Chinese Bureaucracy" in 1974. While he was looking at communications networks, particularly amongst bureaucrats and political leaders, he made some acute observations of the methods of dissemination of politically important news. He noted **gongzuo huiyi** (work conferences), **zhuanye bumen huiyi** (specialist meetings), **zuotan hui** (symposia), **pengtou huiyi** (informal decisional meetings), **chuanda huiyi** (transmission meetings), **jiaoliu huiyi** (exchange of experience meetings), and their use in the dissemination of information. Oksenberg

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37 Ge Chiyin, op cit, 9.

38 Oksenberg, op. cit., 7.
pointed out that state cadres had xiao guangbo (extensive gossip networks) through which they passed on rumours about Peking politics.\textsuperscript{39} He also referred to the circulation of new information through written documents such as directives, preliminary documents, reports, questionnaires and statistics, and written yijian (opinions).

Oksenberg claimed that "Clearly...the unpublicized channels are more important [than mass media], not only within the bureaucracy but between the leaders and the masses as well".\textsuperscript{40} In this he and Chinese journalism professor Wang Zhong were in accord, as Wang Zhong said to his readers: "Of the xinwen (news) you need each day, how much is fabu (published) by news organs, how much comes from personally going and asking, [and] how much is gathered from the xiaodao (small channels)? ...what you gain from media chuanbo gongju (dissemination tools) is the least".\textsuperscript{41} The importance of other news channels vis a vis mass media in China will be tested to some extent within this dissertation.

An alternate and quite reliable informal network was used by decision-makers and others interested in important political news. It was, and is still, identified as xiaodao xiaoxi (news through the small channels). Little has been recorded of this and the subject has not been publicly discussed in any depth. It has been, however, a cause of concern for those whose job it is to report news in the mass media. Gan Xifen in 1980 argued for more reporting of important news in the mass media, in order to strengthen their position

\textsuperscript{39} ibid.
\textsuperscript{40} ibid.
\textsuperscript{41} Wang Zhong, "On News", in XWDX, Vol 1, 12.
against that of **xiaodao xiaoxi**\(^\text{42}\). Chinese newspaper offices carried out reforms to improve news content of news reporting after 1978, and may have had some success in lessening the influence of **xiaodao xiaoxi**. This will be discussed in chapter six, when looking at the relative influence of official news organizations' publications by 1982.

**Dazibao** (wall posters) have also been a means of news communication in China used both in an organized official way and by independent voices\(^\text{43}\). During a brief period from the end of 1978 some mimeographed publications also circulated news and political views for a range of groups from anti-government to semi-independent\(^\text{44}\).

Where mass media are widely available and provide extensive and reliable coverage of news, the co-existence of other forms of circulation assumes lesser importance. In such situations they allow people to check on mass media or discount such news if frequently contradicted. Where news is not widely accessible from mass media, the alternative and more traditional forms of news communication assume greater importance as primary sources.

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of news. While these other media might appear generally slow and limited\textsuperscript{45}, unusual situations might cause a high degree of reliance on them and on the news contained therein.

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPERS

In China in the late 1960s, the system of major newspapers and broadcasting services was greatly reduced in scale. Many of the most prominent newspapers were closed in 1966 with the advent of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution". Observers in Hong Kong noted in 1971 that the Ta Kung Pao (specializing in economic reporting), Chinese Youth Daily (organ of the Chinese Youth League) and Workers' Daily (organ of the Trade Union) had "vanished"\textsuperscript{46}. So too had the few official but popular evening papers\textsuperscript{47}. Wang Ling-ling claims that Ta Kung Pao had its name changed on September 15, 1966 to Advance, adopted a tabloid format and came out thrice weekly, before being closed down three months later.\textsuperscript{48} Of the Workers' Daily he writes that on January 1, 1967, it was renamed the Chinese Workers' Daily and published as a six-day per week tabloid.\textsuperscript{49} The Guangming Daily and Peoples' Daily appear not to have been closed down at

\textsuperscript{45} Wilbur Schramm, an American academic at Stanford University has, together with his colleagues, studied the mass media and other forms of news circulation media of developing countries in some detail. In Western developed nations the practice of reporting information in mass media for the sake of letting people make daily practical decisions is well established. In less developed nations the older traditional and comparatively backward media of information communication assume greater importance. Amongst the various publications on nations with less developed mass media systems is Schramm, Wilbur, \textit{Mass Media and National Development}. Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1964.

\textsuperscript{46} \textit{China News Analysis}. No. 828, 15 Jan 1971, 1.

\textsuperscript{47} ibid., 1-2. The CNA editor noted that these had "stopped publication".

\textsuperscript{48} Wang Ling-ling, "Newspapers on Mainland China" in \textit{Issues and Studies}, Vol. XII, No. 4, April 1976, 32.

\textsuperscript{49} ibid.
all\(^{50}\), although their content changed radically and news was not a prominent feature. As for variety of content, these two national newspapers featured very similar material unlike their diversity of previous years. The editor of China News Analysis in Hong Kong observed in January 1971 that the Guangming Daily had become "only a shadow of its past self. It reprints day after day almost all the articles of PD [Peoples' Daily], adding perhaps a dozen articles of its own in a month".\(^{51}\) Of the local papers, many temporarily suspended publication but were some months later revived under new leadership.\(^{52}\)

The Ta Kung Pao did not reappear but a new financial paper took its place, the Finance and Trade Battlefront. It was in turn replaced by the publication of the China Financial and Trade News from July 1978\(^{53}\). Other newspapers also did not recommence publication until late in 1978 according to the Chinese Journalism Yearbook of 1982\(^{54}\). The Chinese Youth Daily reappeared in October 1978 as a four edition per week paper\(^{55}\). The Workers' Daily likewise recommenced publication in October 1978\(^{56}\) and the

\(^{50}\) During the period of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution", Premier Zhou Enlai zhichi (supported) and guanhuai (looked after) the Guangming Daily, thus ensuring its continued publication. Entry for the daily in XWNJ 1982, 200.


\(^{52}\) Wang Ling-ling lists the provincial ones on 34-37 of his article above.

\(^{53}\) Caimao Zhanxian. Zhongguo Caimao Bao first appeared on 4/7/78; 204 of XWNJ 1982.

\(^{54}\) Referred to in footnotes as XWNJ.


\(^{56}\) Gongren Ribao entry in XWNJ 82, 201. This entry claims the Workers' Daily was actually closed down in 1966.
Chinese Youngsters' Paper, for school children, in November 1978. He Guangxian, deputy editor of the 1982 China Journalism Annual, claimed that the greatest number of newspapers in China at any one time between 1969 and 1970 was 49.

Those newspapers which were not closed had their contents radically revised and there is little evidence to suggest that any of them carried large amounts of news. These media were used in the early 1970s primarily for political and theoretical propagandizing. People therefore could rely less on the mass media than their personal channels of information for news. During that period, Chinese obviously could not obtain much essential news through newspaper reports. Chinese citizens used their own personal information networks through friends, colleagues and acquaintances. Up until 1978 the usage of other means of news circulation intensified. Apart from personal news networks, Red Guard newspapers and radio broadcasting directed by Mao Zedong were used extensively to transmit messages. Big character posters were also important in some circumstances. It is reasonable to assume that it required some years of serious efforts by journalists and editors to reform the newspapers' contents before citizens could rely on these rather than on other channels.

The habit of learning news from sources other than the official news offices was well ingrained by 1978 and continued to exist until after 1982. It is therefore preferable to adopt the broad definition of news contained in the

57 Zhongguo Shaonian Bao entry in XWNJ 82, 206. Closed on 17/8/66 and recommenced publication on 1/11/78.

1981 version of *Cihai* rather than follow the restricted definition of 1979 which ignored the existence of a great deal of news.

**SELECTION AND COLOURING**

Lu Yunfan attempted to explain the progress of events into news. He wrote: "First facts exist, then through *chuanbo* (circulation) the facts turn into news". He emphasized that events must be *faxian* (perceived) and *chuanbo* (circulated) in order to be called news.59 Ge Chiyin, supporting the 1981 *Cihai* definition of news as being better than previous versions, remarked that there was "no news unless factual situations changed", but that these changes were *chuanbo* (circulated) as news "only when they had some close relationship to the society or the life of the masses".60 Such an understanding of news was incorporated into the second statement of the 1981 *Cihai* entry, that news:

"...emerges from the needs of people to understand and link up the circumstances of social activity."61.

How events were perceived depended upon the particular human beings involved. The form in which information of events was transmitted also varied according to the needs of the people doing the transmitting.

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59 Lu Yunfan, ibid, 23.

60 Ge Chiyin, op cit, 9.

61 *Cihai Fence*, 1981. For the full definition see page 22. The whole definition appears to be a patchwork of features which Wang Zhong intended to assist readers in better identifying news. While keeping appreciation of its evolution within a Marxist-influenced way of thinking, what the Party expects journalists to do with news is thus visible but overtones of monopoly are a little more limited. The features were the emergence of specialist news gatherers and disseminators, news as a means of propaganda, and news as an exchangeable commodity.
Certain factors involved in the transmission of news tend to complicate its reception. News is transmitted as part of the organization of people into societies, their socialization to fellow beings, and their education. Interpretation is always a factor influencing the decision-making of those who circulate news. The presentation of the similar news as defined simply - information, facts - can cause people to judge and to act differently. News has been used deliberately to motivate or mobilize people to act. Selective telling of news, the choice of hard or coloured facts, favourable to an authority's image for example, can also influence people to support an order and its policies.

News might be presented in a dry, factual manner but selectively providing different partial pictures of the changes which occurred and thus influencing thinking and actions into the form or pattern desired by the disseminators.

The psychological or emotive effects of the words used also causes people to understand new information and occurrences differently. The adjectives, adverbs and other words of colour with which dry facts are couched affect the receiver's feelings and thus his attitudes, though sometimes in ways opposite to those intended.

One can always find evidence of selection or colouring in the formal news circulation of any nation. A well-known group of researchers in Glasgow, who studied the circulation of news through British television called these influences 'encoding'; the presentation of news slanted through the language used, including:
"the structuring of the information, the imputation of causes, the pattern of interviewer questions, the use of rhetoric"\(^\text{62}\).

In the domestic mass media of China, the dry facts of news stories are often unashamedly couched with adjectives, adverbs and other words of colour reflecting the perception of the people who designed the stories. The Chinese writers were well aware of this. One writer who discussed the selection of news for stories and the way in which opinion and interpretation coloured it was Gan Xifen from the influential Chinese People's University Department of Journalism in Beijing. He noted that news (transmission) was not just "the baodao (reporting) of fact" but also "embodied a pingjia (evaluation) of those facts and the fabuzhe (circulator's) yijian (opinions) [about them]"\(^\text{63}\). Gan wrote several pages about this colouring of news, in terms of the zhengzhi qingxiang (political inclination) of formal news stories\(^\text{64}\). He acknowledged that politically inclined colouring might be clearly identifiable as addition to the factual story, but permeated a factual story in such a way that the receiver was not aware of bias.\(^\text{65}\) For example, interpretations of news, and opinions about events, are presented distinctly through the forms of editorials, special articles and cartoons. These contain factual news but they also contain estimates of situations, opinions about the situation and commentary. A simple news item may appear to relate only facts but by its very brevity the amount of factual information which may be contained in a brief news item is limited. Therefore only a partial picture is shown.

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\(^{63}\) Gan Xifen, "What is News?”, *XWXLT*, Volume 1, 15.
\(^{64}\) Gan Xifen, "What is News?”, *XWXLT*, Volume 1, 15-21.
\(^{65}\) Gan Xifen, "What is News?”, *XWXLT*, Volume 1, 15.
PROCESSING OF NEWS AND JOURNALISTIC IDEOLOGY

Gan Xifen described the selection of news for news stories as "jiagong (processing)"\textsuperscript{66}. The manufacturing or processing of new information into news reports is a concept which Western journalists have also recognized. John Temple, a British journalist, raised it in a book which summarized his experiences and observations of professional news reporting over several decades in Britain and Australia. He dismissed the commonly held notion in his sphere that news was simply 'gathered' by journalists. He said "News has never been lying about, waiting to be 'gathered'". It is, and always has been, a manufactured article - manufactured by journalists". They "oblige us all by taking [an] event as raw material, and by putting it through their manufacturing process".\textsuperscript{67}

Gan Xifen addressed in detail the manufacture of news as a matter familiar to his journalistic tradition. He had a long appreciation of political ideology governing news circulation through formal news media. The Chinese were also aware and experienced in having political leaders use news and mass media. Gan Xifen stressed the influence of a specific ideology on all reporting of news. He likened all news organizations to 'sixiang jiagong chang (ideological processing factories)'. In the 'factory' new, raw factual material is collected. Then the course, background to, reasons for, and outcome of the factual incidents are processed into an

\textsuperscript{66} Gan Xifen, "What is News?", XWXLI, Volume 1, 22. and his Xinwen Lilun Jichu, 40.

'jingxin paozhi (elaborately cooked) xinwen chanpin (news product)'.

He argued that this was done through the xuanze (selection) of "facts which have occurred", meaning real information of recent important incidents, and the jieshi (explanation) and fenxi (analysis) of these.\(^\text{68}\)

He was obviously dealing only with news produced by organizations for public consumption. Being preoccupied with conservative political expectations of the formal news media in China, he identified this same "news product" with a 'xuanchuan pin (propaganda material)'\(^\text{69}\) for the 'masses'. Gan Xifen concluded that the 'returns' for the news thus processed and disseminated were 'numerous sympathizers' with the factory's ideology. The news fabu (disseminated) by any organization necessarily contains and thus chuanbo (circulates) the sixiang (ideology) of that organization at the same time as it puts facts into a story.\(^\text{70}\)

While in the British tradition of news reporting much emphasis has been placed upon objectivity, that news is basically factual information, researchers in Glasgow also found that:

"facts do not exist in isolation and they are part and parcel of encoded messages of which the codes and conventions ... turn upon a given ideology"\(^\text{71}\).

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\(^\text{68}\) Gan Xifen, "What is News?", \textit{XWXLI}, Volume 1, 22. and his \textit{Xinwen Lilun Jichu}, 40.

\(^\text{69}\) The references to propaganda material refer specifically to the preoccupations of the Chinese researchers when they analyze public news circulation.

\(^\text{70}\) Gan Xifen, "What is News?", \textit{XWXLI}, Volume 1, 1980, 22. and his \textit{Xinwen Lilun Jichu}, 40.

\(^\text{71}\) Glasgow, Media Group, \textit{More Bad News}, 137.
The ideology of any Chinese news organization seems at first more readily defined than that of its counterpart in Britain. This is due to comparatively strict direction, control and public justification in the People's Republic of China. The Western media are less organized or obviously purposeful except during conditions of wartime. Yet, the work of Chinese news offices, particularly in times of little direction by the Propaganda Departments of Party committees, is largely governed by an ideology or way of thinking inside the heads of Chinese journalists and editors. The Chinese journalistic ideology is examined in some detail in Chapter Three.

NEWS IN THE MASS MEDIA

Much of the discussion in the Chinese guides to the practice of journalism was concerned with the effects of transmission of news through the public mass media. News carried by mass media has potentially a much wider audience than that carried in other ways. In spite of being aware of news circulation outside the formal news media, Chinese writers must have felt that newspapers and broadcasts could powerfully influence large numbers of people. Certainly, Chinese journalists were encouraged in this with a campaign to reform the newspapers from 1978 onwards, and the selection and publication of "best news" selections.

To identify the news in the mass media one looks for stories which include real or factual information which was not previously known and at the way in which this material is made known. News stories appear in

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72 Many of these appeared with official sanction from 1978 onwards. The earliest made publicly available was a selection of 1978 news stories by Xinhua news agency journalists, in Xinhua Wencong 1978, Xinhua Publishing House, Beijing 1980. Publication of these in 1980 coincided very nearly with the Peoples' Daily news office printing on the front page of its daily newspaper the six 'best news stories' selected from newspapers around the country. See RMRB, 10/10/80, 1.
Chinese newspapers in two most important forms - the xiaoxi (news item) and the tongxun (news report). The first is fairly short and just states what happened, without making much attempt to go into the details of why. Theoretically it neither provides a policy context nor uses special techniques to persuade people to take a particular attitude to the event. It usually contains only xiaoxi (news) as that word was explained earlier in this chapter. Another news form similar to the "item" and sometimes even shorter is the jianxun (news brief).

The tongxun (news report) can encompass all of the latter attributes. It appeared under the following names: renwu tongxun (character report) whose focus was a particular political personality or a model worker; shijian tongxun (incident report) of an important event; gongzuo tongxun (work report) of something considered an advancement in a particular profession or trade; and the fangwen ji (visit record) or caifang zhaji (where a journalist had made a record of his visit to a person or place).

According to the Xiezuo Zhishi Congshu of 1979-1980, the "item" and "news report" together with two other forms, the xinwen texie (news special writing) and the diaocha baogao (investigative report) form the main body of news or news stories to be found in the newspaper.

Some news might also appear in Chinese newspapers in formats which are not strictly identified as news stories. As mentioned earlier, news can be found of the intentions of important figures or organizations, the attitudes of leaders, and statements of government policy in other formats such as pinglun (commentaries) and shelun (editorials). These are renowned in

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73 Xiaoqi he Tongxun, Jilin Peoples' Publishing House, Xiezuo zhishi congshu series, 8/1980, 1.
China as a source of important political news particularly that which the Party leadership chooses to make known. Thus editorials in China's newspapers contain news, in spite of the fact that they appear to be articles expressing opinions rather than straight objective factual details. Editorials in the People's Daily, for example, contained clear signals for action and were read as such. The concept of an editorial as news is not found in Western studies and theories of news and news circulation, since editorials in the West are usually written by newspaper proprietors or editors and not by government leaders.

If the word news is applied in its broadest sense of new information it can be identified in newspaper items which are not generally classified as news reports. For example, in Chinese journalism circles, the following formats are classed as news reports: xiaoxi, tongxun, diaocha baogao (investigative reports) and so on. Editorials and other commentary articles are not so classified yet they contain new information of the intentions or orders of important figures in Party-dominated China. Chinese readers look to the editorials to find the views and attitudes of the country's leaders and indications of government policy, whether directly or through reading between the lines. In this way, editorials in China's newspapers contain important political news, in spite of the fact that they might at first be regarded in a traditional light as articles expressing opinions rather than new details of fact.

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74 Mr I.F.H. Wilson suggested a case could be made for commentaries in Chinese newspapers being a news form.
In a 1973 handbook for Chinese journalists, editorials were described as 'articles of instruction which speak for the... Party committee'\(^75\). Editorials in the national press "expound the lines and general and specific policies of the Party and the government toward important national and international events and incidents"\(^76\). Those in the local press 'provided the central task of a period and the measures and methods etc for completing that task' at the provincial or county level or for the factory, mine or unit to which the newspaper belonged\(^77\).

**Duzhe laixin** (readers' letters), also contain news, although not included in most Chinese news theory as news stories. These letters often raise new information about activity within the society. Of the letters which reached a Chinese news office, many were transmitted along internal channels and did not appear in the mass media. Efforts to include more of this news from the public, within the constraints of the policy guidelines for newspaper political content, brought more such news into the mass media in the late 1970s and early 1980s\(^78\).

\(^75\) Yunnan Daxue Zhongwen Xi Xinwen Zhuanye, edited and written, Xinwen Xiezuo, 1973, 148.

\(^76\) ibid.

\(^77\) ibid.

\(^78\) Selections of letters actually received from the public are not available for analysis. However, from amongst those which were chosen for publication in the newspapers some variety of this type of news can be gleaned. See for example the translations of letters published in the *Peoples' Daily* during 1978, in Thomas, Hugh, (editor and translator), *Comrade Editor: Letters to the Peoples' Daily*, Joint Publishing Co., Hong Kong 1980. He has divided his selection into letters about the countryside, city, younger generation, cultural life, class struggle, work, the use and abuse of power, and cadres.
THE PARTY'S ATTITUDE

All of the above formats which appeared in the Chinese domestic press were products of "elaborate manufacture"79. To find xiaoxi (news) in them, in their simplest forms, requires some understanding of what goes into the formats: the ideology and political leanings behind the writing of them.

The political theory of China's rulers meant that the paramount usage of news circulation was for politically influencing public opinion. All aspects of the society and economy were overseen and controlled by Party members and officials. Similarly, the Party controlled access to important information used in decision-making in all spheres and at all levels. Vital information was collected for the leadership by propaganda cadres and by journalists, to be distributed to those in positions where the leaders deemed it was necessary to the carrying out of responsibilities - in other words to those who had been chosen by the leadership for their reliability. According to the leadership's philosophy, the masses or general public need guidance, to be led by the vanguard. Thus major decisions had to be made on their behalf by the Party leaders. To varying extents members of the Party leadership have felt the public should only be given restricted access to important news. At times leaders have espoused theories for the moulding of Chinese public opinion. During one period, it appeared that Mao Zedong felt emotional inspiration was the best way to move people to action. Other leaders have been more concerned with providing large amounts of news and information and organizing people with laws and formal structures. Generally speaking political dictation of peoples' needs, at least publicly, has made the mass

79 Gan Xifen, ibid., 40.
media rather rigidly organized and news has appeared in a formalized manner.

In 1979 and 1980, Party leaders talked about the Party’s propaganda and xinwen gongzuo (news work) under the leadership of the Party. They addressed people as the "news workers" on one of the Party’s battle lines - the "news front". Hu Yaobang, Director of the Propaganda Department of the Party’s Central Committee, remarked in February 1979, that the xinwen zhanxian (news front) was very important for reaching millions of people daily with "xuanchuan (propaganda) of the Party's general and specific policies (and for) fanying (revealing) the whole situation as it developed". In other words, journalists and editors were to produce news stories and commentary to complement the efforts of other Party workers. News and other xuanchaun gongzuozhe propaganda workers were all expected to communicate the intentions of the leaders and to persuade the people to carry them out. The observations he made, on the position of PRC newspapers, publications, broadcasts and news agencies, were a part of his talk on "...several questions to attend to in the current propaganda work".

At the National News Work Conference in March of 1979, Hu spoke specifically about "news work" in the "new period". He remarked that both the Party and the people of China had a long-developed tradition of seeing PRC newspapers, broadcasting stations and news agencies as mouthpieces of the Party’s Central Committee. As such, news workers were expected to work at qifa (arousing) and educating the populace and to influence their

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80 Hu Yaobang, "Tan Dangqian Xuanchuan Gongzuo Yao Zhuyi de Jige Wenti" 28 Feb, 1979, in Fuyin Baokan Ziliao.

81 ibid.
general thinking. He reiterated that these news organs must continue to be "led by" the Party and to be gongju (tools) of the Party\textsuperscript{82}. A few weeks later he directed news workers to make efforts in ten particular areas, all of which were specifically addressed as propaganda\textsuperscript{83}.

Deng Xiaoping, in October 1979, referred to news workers, amongst others, as a cujinpai (promotions corps) working amongst the populace to "liberate thinking", promote "stability and unity", protect the "unification of the motherland" and to implement the "four modernizations"\textsuperscript{84}, in other words, as people who were working for the government within the guidelines of current government policy and with the direction of the leaders.

Hu Yaobang said leading comrades of provincial committees should seek out comrades engaged in news work at the appropriate time and chu yidian timu (raise topics) for them. They should also "in a timely way instruct (the news people) what to xuanchuan (propagate)... and how to xuanchuan (propagate) it, ... tell them what questions to emphasize and to guide them..." in each period of defined time.

It is therefore clear that in 1979 the leadership was preoccupied with the use of news-carrying media to assist it in carrying out its new policies. In other words, news was not the focus of their attention but the messages which carried news (and the interpretations which could be made of the news) did interest them. The leaders wanted to control and manipulate these messages. They were also interested in the new factual information which

\begin{footnotes}
\item[82] ibid.
\item[83] Hu Yaobang's Speeches to the National Symposium on News Work, March 10, and March18, 1979.
\item[84] Deng Xiaoping's Congratulatory Speech at the Fourth Congress of China's Literature and Arts Workers, 30 October, 1979.
\end{footnotes}
journalists gathered xiaoxi (news) reaching their own ears but they considered this an internal matter. Thus they received xiaoxi in its sense of qingbao (intelligence). Their public utterances were mainly about mass media of xinwen (news) and the use of these as means for reaching the public with political messages because they preferred to restrict as much politically sensitive information as possible. The broadening of access to xiaoxi came about as the changes in economic policy created a need, seen by the leadership, for people in general to have access to a wider variety of news and information.

Hu Yaobang stated outright that the Party committees should "utilize the newspapers, newsagencies and broadcasting stations to carry out their (own) work and (exercise) leadership". The news that Party leaders obliquely addressed was that gathered and distributed by news office staff. Specific references to the "news front" and "news workers" excluded other forms of communication which they also used. These others were referred to along with "news work" under the general titles of "propaganda work" and "cultural work".

The Party leaders perceived news production within the context of efforts to carry out their propaganda. The Chinese Communist Party maintained its monopoly of news communication to support its political monopoly and the social cohesion of the citizens of the Peoples' Republic of China under its rule. The Chinese writers therefore had to devote some energy to discussing news dissemination as a part of general propaganda because the whole social and political context in which they operated was governed by the Party.

PROPAGANDA

As Chinese writers were well aware, news is frequently used to bolster particular interests and sometimes communicated in the interests of propaganda.

The Chinese official definition of *xuanchuan* (propaganda) is: "to illustrate and to explain [to the masses] so that the masses believe and act accordingly".86 This statement represents a benevolent attitude of rulers towards the ruled. The practice, over several decades of Communist Party rule, has varied from a war-like, emotional propaganda with distortions and fabrications to the more sedate factual elucidation of events for peaceful achievement of goals.

In the 1981 *Cihai*, the definition for *xinwen* included the statement that: "...News gradually became the propaganda medium for all kinds of political forces and social groupings..."87

According to Wang Zhong in an article published in *News University*, *xuanchuan* (propaganda) is: the propagation of a *zhuyi* (doctrine) and *quanshuo* (persuasion) of people to accept it.88 In the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, to propagandize is defined as:

"to disseminate (principles) by organized effort" or to "subject to a propaganda" (which is defined as "any association, systematic scheme, or

86 *Xiandai Hanyu Cidian.*
87 *Cihai*, 1981.
concerted movement for the propagation of a particular doctrine or practice\textsuperscript{89}.

In the West earlier this century propaganda was considered a negative concept.\textsuperscript{90} In the 1970s and 1980s, professional news gatherers in the West would hardly claim to be using their news to propagandize. There are different colours to propaganda depending upon the time and the place where it was used and the feelings of those involved in creating it or being subjected to it. Whether the propaganda is considered positive or negative by those who perceive it, news is often chosen to contribute to or reinforce certain attitudes.

In China, propaganda has been stressed as a necessary and often positive concept. One American academic has observed, in his survey of events early in the twentieth century that 'writing in the service of a political goal was considered by most Chinese a higher calling than dispassionate reporting detached from the national struggle for survival'.\textsuperscript{91}

Wang Zhong discussed news and propaganda in the context of the need for political parties to conduct their own propaganda.\textsuperscript{92} He said a political party used propaganda to build its own strength, to seize political

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{89} Shorter Oxford English Dictionary.

\textsuperscript{90} Professor Guido Fauconnier addresses the attitudes amongst those Western academics who have studied it and are considered authorities in his Mass Media and Society, Universitaire Pers Leuven, 1975, 130-135. The definition with which Professor Fauconnier concluded is also appropriate: 'propaganda is a form of [mass] communication in which the communicator (the propagandist) consciously attempts to influence the opinions, attitudes and behaviours of a person, a group of persons or the masses, exclusively or predominantly by means of directive persuasive techniques'.


\end{footnotesize}
power and to maintain its political power. He stressed that while news and propaganda were not identical, a political party might use news which benefitted itself, for its own interests. The news might be chosen to prove to people the correctness of the party's own doctrine, theory and policies or serve to arouse people in the interests of that party.

To his Chinese audience of journalists and other people concerned with the news media, Wang Zhong emphasized that the two "great basic functions of newspapers are to supply xinwen (news) and to carry out xuanchuan (propaganda). He did stress, however, that news (reporting) is not all political propaganda, nor does all of it serve the political goals of a political party.

POLITICALLY CONSERVATIVE JOURNALISM

In 1980, amongst the practitioners and teachers of journalism in the PRC, there was much debate about news and its means of communication. Their focus was on the xinwen produced by news offices for publication in the newspapers and for broadcast on radio and television. Amongst other issues they discussed news media as tools, the roles of news media in uniting public opinion and organizing public opinion, news freedom, and the relationship between news media and class. The debate about these issues is too involved to discuss in depth here. A brief look at the "defence" of a major speaker who upheld view of the role of news media dominant in previous decades, will shed some light.

93 ibid., 6.
94 zhuyi
95 Wang Zhong, ibid, 5.
One of the major voices in the debate was that of Gan Xifen of the Chinese Peoples' University Journalism Department. He later published an essay entitled "Addressing the Divergence of Opinions" in defence of his own viewpoints. This essay expressed the dominant view of the role of the mass media in previous decades. Gan emphasized Lenin's thinking on news media. He defended himself against criticism that he had ignored the writings of Marx and Engels in his expounding of a Chinese theory of journalism. His response was that Lenin's experience was more relevant to the Chinese situation, because Lenin had controlled and used media under a Communist Party government as well as using media to topple a previous government. He argued that news media should be used to expose, as Marx and Engels had used them but that "construction", in other words, assisting the Party and government to carry out their wishes by influencing the public, was more important. Gan claimed that Marx and Engels "lacked a clear understanding of the class nature of newspapers and periodicals ... (and) of laws".

In Lenin's conception, news was not simply transmitted for purposes of information. He believed that "all news, every piece of information, must have an inner tendency, must point to a certain goal, and must agitate for something".

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96 March 1981 - see appendix to his book Xinwen Lilun Jichu, and also volume 3 of XWXLI.

97 Gan Xifen's Xinwen Lilun Jichu was one of the first books expounding a news theory or ideology for China since the political thaw of the late 1970s. He wrote a draft version early in 1980 which was one subject of debate amongst journalism teaching and research authorities during a national symposium in December 1980. The book was published by the China Peoples' University Publishing House in July 1982, but carried the classification benshe nebu faxing restricting its distribution.

98 ibid, 219.

Gan Xifen said all news media should be looked upon as "tools", whether of propaganda or profit. He claimed as fact that all news offices had some political background, and quoted official Party utterances of 1978 and 1979 on class consciousness and the nature of society, emphasizing with what definition of political background he was primarily concerned. Gan argued that mass media are tools which in China should properly be the tools of 'the proletarian dictatorship' or of the 'peoples' democratic dictatorship', in other words the Party and the Chinese government. The media should 'create public opinion on a large scale to defend and strengthen the proletarian dictatorship". Thus the news media were expected to heed the Party's authority and talk about serious issues in the way which the Party desired the people should think.

Gan believed that promotion of conformity and obedience should be a primary goal of the mass media, in his own words the media should "unify public opinion". This contrasts with an idea he did not raise - that of informing people and letting them make their own decisions or contribute independently to the taking of larger decisions within the society. His view of unifying public opinion was to have everyone see the greater political directions in terms of "building the Four Modernizations "(ie implementing the government's economic policies) and working together as a stable and united populace (meaning not to raise issues which could divide opinions or encourage too much individual decision-making without Party direction), in order that the population work together toward common goals.

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100 Gan Xifen, Xinwen Lilun Jichu, 221.
101 ibid., 224-225.
102 ibid., 231.
A further attitude to using mass media was that of organizing public opinion. Gan wrote that the concepts of reflecting public opinion and influencing public opinion had been generally accepted by most of the news personnel. Some, however, distrusted and disagreed with the organization of public opinion. It was disputed whether this should not be ignored as an invalid role for mass media. Gan Xifen quoted Mao Zedong\textsuperscript{103}, and described valid use of news media for public opinion organization as follows: '...sometimes newspapers will organize mass discussion of a question in a planned, goal-oriented way, publishing one after the other a lot of letter manuscripts on every aspect (of it), encouraging correct opinions and correcting erroneous opinions.'\textsuperscript{104} He said news media should be used to put the thinking of the Party into effect everywhere, to lead the masses to opinions and attitudes in accordance with the Party's line.

It is clear that Gan Xifen thought the political goals of the Party leaders should be assisted by the controlled and managed distribution of news to the public. Throughout his argument he came down heavily on the side of tight management of news circulation and the manipulation of minds through the formal mass media. Thus he differed from other journalism professors such as Wang Zhong who had tried to separate news and distinguish it as a concept separate from its media of communication and from tactics of persuasion.

**REFORM OF NEWS MEDIA**

Into the 1980s, the understanding of news as information became more important as Party leaders became more conscious that more informed people

\textsuperscript{103} ibid., 232-3.

\textsuperscript{104} ibid., 234.
could better implement their policies for economic reform and development. Thus they allowed and encouraged reform of news media to include more of the xiaoxi type of news.

The 1981 definition of xinwen (news) and the writings of Professor Wang Zhong and others were intended to draw peoples' thinking away from the rigid conservative stance. Ge Chiyin and Wang Zhong both discussed at some length news as a concept above and beyond what the Party's politicians wished were true. The role of news reporting to inform the population of the intentions of their government gained ascendancy early in the 1980s. This information is transmitted in the ways referred to by Oksenberg and through the formal mass media. News of leaders' intentions and of the movements of leaders are some of the most important political news to be transmitted through the Chinese newspapers. In this sense, the news is politically important while not in itself being propaganda.

News reform was launched in 1979 with the slogan "more, better, faster and shorter", meaning newspapers should contain a larger proportion of news over other materials, better written items, shorter items, and quicker delivery of news to readers. The major aims were to increase the information content of newspapers and the reliability of news in order that the public would rely on the mass media over which the leadership exercised direction. The potential of news dissemination to influence people in China became a more prominent topic in China after that.

The growth of news reporting has certainly been apparent in China in the early 1980s. The PRC journalist was no longer required primarily to

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105 The issue of briefer news was raised when News Front Xinwen Zhanxian magazine, the major professional journal for working news editors and journalists, resumed publication in November 1978.
prepare and write theoretical materials to order, heavily slanted "news" items and distortions of fact in the name of a correct ideological stance. Journalists and editors in the 1980s were required to be more professional gatherers and disseminators of vast amounts of news and information. From 1978 the authorities of the PRC set out to reform the newspapers. They increased the numbers of newspapers available and conducted campaigns to improve the news content. One slogan used was 'write more news, write shorter news, write better news'. Nationwide selections of the best news published in the newspapers were made and publicized. The Xinhua News Agency also had begun producing booklets of the best news from within its own organization annually from 1978\textsuperscript{106}.

The first national selection of 'good news' from the newspapers was conducted in 1980. Based on the 1979 newspaper output, its aim was to promote the news reform campaign and thus make newspapers better able to serve the new national economic policies, known by the catchphrase "the Four Modernizations"\textsuperscript{107}. This was the first such selection since 1949, although internal selections within some individual newspaper offices had been conducted in the interim period. The six best articles and twenty-five second prize items were chosen from amongst many earlier nominated during the second half of 1980. In May 1979 the criteria for the selection of nominated articles were published in \textit{News Front}\textsuperscript{108}. On the tenth of October 1980, the Peoples' Daily printed the best six accompanied by remarks on their selection by senior news personnel. Those stories covered a range of


\textsuperscript{108} XWZX, 10, 1979, 2.
subjects; a heroic soldier in the Vietnamese-Chinese border clashes, peasants' praise of the recent government policies, a night street market in Nanjing, the sudden engagements of four bachelor brothers, a case of official corruption in Denmark, and a shortage of soy sauce in Beijing.

The six stories and accompanying commentaries provide some insight into the type of changes expected in the initial stages of reform of the news media. The emphasis was on promoting more xiaoxi. The selection of such pieces was, however, dependent upon both the newsy style in which they were written and on the usefulness for propagation of the policies current in 1979-80. A brief examination of these illustrates the juxtaposition of news and current Party policy in news items.

"Yang Chaofen - A Living Huang Jiguang" was originally published in the Liberation Army Daily from the 23rd of February 1979. It represents a distinct type of news item, the character report, which has been used in Chinese communist propaganda since the earliest years, by ruling groups with differing ideological lines. Reporting the brave act of a young soldier during the Sino-Vietnamese border fighting from late 1978 to early 1979, in the newspaper of the People's Liberation Army, it is an example of the sort of spirit soldiers are expected to emulate as well as a report of an act of amazing courage.

Li Ang, the commentator on the selection of this article, praised it for omission of laudatory and correct ideological thoughts attributed to the hero. In his remarks, Li mentioned heroic figure stories written in a similar style: "Liu Hulan Dies A Martyr's Death", "Dong Cunrui Sacrifices Himself To Blow Up a Blockhouse", and "A Matrosov-type of Hero - Huang Jiguang". All of these stories were written no later than the early 1950s. Stories about heroes popular in 1975 - Lei Feng, Wang Jie, Ou-Yang Hai, Jiao Yulu,
Yang Shuicai, and Wang Jinxi - are not mentioned. The likely reasons for such omission are lengthy written style in which those heroes were depicted, and the hero type not fitting in with contemporary political policies and practices.

Li commends the item also for brevity and simplicity. Apparently, according to Ye Xin, short news items were regarded as somewhat politically suspect in the early 1970s. Newspapers and magazines had been published in very limited numbers and sizes, composed of generally long and verbose articles. The two issues here were brevity to encourage readers not to ignore the item plus the ideological style of thoughts from the hero's mouth. Heroic figures used to be presented with correct ideological thoughts and utterances to represent the ideal figure to be emulated. The more recent trend is to present heroes with readily believable actions so that the readers might take the reports seriously.

The second of the first-rate articles was jointly written by two New China News Agency journalists. When first published in the People's Daily, "The Peasants All Praise The Policies Of The Third Plenum" appeared on the front page. Further prominence was given to it by separating it from other articles and enclosing it in a decorative border. It could be classed as a political policy statement under agricultural propaganda. The main body of the article lists ten benefits which have been felt in the countryside after the implementation of the policies, some "substantiated" with facts - brief examples from a specified commune. These proofs of benefit are presented as remarks made to the visiting journalists by the representative of the "basic level" cadres, who in turn represent the broad masses. The article concludes by acknowledging that people are still wary of the recent changes and unsure how long these will continue to be implemented. Assurance is given that no
political movements will be initiated and interfere with the improvement of conditions in the countryside.

It would be interesting to know who initiated the story, what train of events led to its publication and whether the facts presented were reliable. The Agriculture Group of the news agency's Domestic Affairs Department enlightens the reader a little by commenting on the article's selection. The authors used the example of one commune where the new agricultural policies were being successfully implemented to demonstrate that such implementation is feasible and receives popular support. Messages included in the item are reassurance of participating in the reforms and a warning to obstructers of the implementation of these policies.

"A Night Street Market At The Weekend Is Welcomed" was published in Jiangsu province's Xinhua Daily where it is read by people in the capital Nanjing and throughout the province. It concentrates on the national government's instruction to improve the daily lives of the people in a material way. Night markets were set up in the Drum Tower district. The products and services offered there and the popularity of the markets were described in the newspaper. The item advertised to citizens the locations of some of these markets and the products available for purchase. Also, as the commentators Chong Shan and Guang Xian remarked, it 'passed on the advanced experience to the commerce departments of cities and villages in other areas' probably signalling them to follow suit and organize local markets on a similar style.

"'Bachelor Hall' Draws In Four 'Golden Phoenixes'" was first published in the Tianjin Daily and reprinted for nationwide circulation in the Peoples' Daily. It reported the great change in personal circumstances of a former landlord family since a post Third Plenum policy decision. It showed
the concern of the Central committee of the Party for children of landlord families who had proved themselves in the new society through labour and learning of the acceptable attitudes expected of good citizens. Having earned the right to be trusted by the Party, these children had their family status changed, the former status being labelled "wrong classification". Thus allowed social acceptability the sons of the family finally were able to find wives. They will, according to the article, further prove their worthiness by being even better and more obedient workers for the PRC. As the commentator He Guangxian remarks, the article has strong zhenduixing (in other words is strongly directed). The article is written in a 'moving' style which 'brings across to readers the joy' of those people, people finally granted absolution from the sin of being born to an unacceptable class of people.

"Squandered Public Money Is Repaid - And Once Again She Takes Up A Position as Minister" reports on the reinstatement in Ministerial office of a Danish politician after dismissal for abuse of government funds. The 'breakthrough' of this item, which made it such a good news item in the PRC, was its use of the experience of a capitalist country to imply that even higher standards must be expected in the socialist society of the PRC.

The sixth 'best' item "Why Beijing's Soya Sauce Went Out of Stock" reported the results of a journalistic investigation into the scarcity of a basic culinary condiment, soya sauce, in Beijing. Reporters followed up a lead - that of being unable to purchase the product. By persisting in inquiries they unravelled a six-year long series of errors and bureaucratic incompetency on
the part of the various government offices and Party committees concerned\textsuperscript{109}.

In summary, the messages of the six 'best from 1979 can be interpreted as follows: brave and selfless comrades who serve the community should be admired and emulated; the new agricultural policies are being implemented and the correct behaviour of both the masses and cadres is to welcome these instructions and comply with them; the Party is concerned with the quality and standard of the masses' daily life and encourages some limited individual enterprise and the open-air market supply of a variety of consumer items; the Party has offered change in social classification to citizens and happy domestic changes have ensued; minor corruption followed by restitution of squandered monies enables mistaken cadres to return to their jobs; and journalists can successfully follow up a serious domestic problem in the community and publish - at least in limited form - the incompetence of government departments once the government has already begun to rectify the situation\textsuperscript{110}.

The circulation of news in China is multifaceted. That presented in the public mass media is deliberately tempered by political requirements. News, however, is regarded by some Chinese experts and news gathering professionals to be a distinct concept. It can be and often is used for political purposes but has value in itself as simple information. The creation of propaganda and the selection of news to suit it is a condition imposed by the

\textsuperscript{109} All six reprinted with commentaries in RMRB, 10/10/80, 4.

\textsuperscript{110} The next twenty-five items, awarded second prize, were printed in a booklet for the journalism industry Hao Xinwen Good News by Peoples' Daily Publishing House in 1980. In it, the first and second prize items were each followed by a commentary.
political leaders who see influential mass media as useful tools of social and economic control.
CHAPTER TWO - OFFICIAL COLLECTION OF NEWS

In the PRC, the content of newspapers actually reflects only a small proportion of the activity of the newspaper offices. The staffs of editors and reporters, along with their outstation correspondents and stringers are specialists in the gathering and sifting of information and 'public opinion'. This chapter will address the organization and operation of the news offices and the tasks of the different members of staff. The sort of news brought to the offices depended upon the news sense of the reporters as the handling of that information did on the thinking of the editors. Two examples of journalistic investigative reporting will be described, revealing the sort of obstruction which can hinder the actual gathering of news as well as its reporting. The news office was also used by members of the public as a kind of ombudsman to which complaints and problems could be confided.

Officially endorsed news gathering was carried out by the offices of newspapers. Since the names of newspaper offices are the same as that of the major public newspaper which each produces, it is necessary to specify at all times whether the newspaper, for example the Peoples' Daily, or the organization, for example the Peoples' Daily Office is being discussed. The news offices played various political roles as centres of collection, sifting and distribution of news. They were staffed by permanent professionals, collectively known as journalists, but identified as reporter or editor in their different tasks.

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1 and broadcasting stations.

2 Chinese newspaper houses were involved in other publishing ventures and production of internal bulletins as well as their respective well-known published newspapers carrying the house's name.
The journalists collected news and sifted it, as gatherers of intelligence for Party committees, in the interests of the masses as ombudsmen, and for processing into public news stories. The PRC journalist thus assisted the Party organization to administer its policies, find weaknesses in the operation of the system, and pass on the concerns of the ordinary citizen. In these activities they were assisted by submissions from members of the public, through the laixin laifang (letters and visits) function, and the office’s part-time semi-professional news staff, the tongxunyuan (stringers).

ORGANIZATION OF NEWSPAPER OFFICES

All staff of news offices were involved daily in the collection of news. Although the editors seemed to be involved more often in the final preparation of news reports, both reporters and editors ranked in parallel scales of seniority and remuneration. The editor organized the investigation and reporting tasks of the reporters and dealt with the manuscripts produced - their selection for different destinations, checking and sub-editing. If an editor was working in the mass work department he had further responsibilities to sort the letters and other submissions from the public and deal with them. The editor also prepared manuscripts solicited from the specially invited commentators to be published in the press. A former high-ranking reporter could take over an editorial position as the head of a department.

The staff in the news offices were generally referred to collectively as jizhe (journalists), though jizhe was sometimes applied specifically to reporters, while bianji referred to editors. The work of journalists has been

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3 At 1982.
defined simply in the PRC dictionaries as the gathering, writing and presentation of news. In 1976 the *Journalism Dictionary* defined journalists as: "the staffs of newspapers and publications, radio stations, television stations, editorial departments of news agencies who deal with the business of news".\(^4\) In the 1980 *Cihai* the general definition of journalists was: "the name given to news workers who participate in editing, collection of news by investigation and interviewing and in commentatory work".\(^5\)

The news offices were organized according to the principle *bian cai tong heyi*\(^6\) to carry out the tasks of gathering, editing and reporting news. Thus the administration of a news office, at least at the levels of central and district Party papers was distinguished by professional departments and other business departments gathered together under the editorial department. The latter, referred to as a 'comprehensive department responsible for editorial business, and in some news offices also responsible for the overall work of journalists, editors and correspondents', had the final word inside the office on any decision taken.\(^7\) Its leading organ was the "editorial committee", including the chief editor appointed by the Party committee.\(^8\) Material would be collected from the journalists, readers and part-timers into the 'professional' departments which dealt with specific subject areas, sifted

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\(^4\) *XWXXCD*, 1976.

\(^5\) *Cihai Fence*, 1981.

\(^6\) *Zhongguo Xinwen Shi*, Xiace, Ceng Xubai (bian), Guoli Zhengzhi Daxue - Xinwen Yanjiu Suo, Taibei, 1966, 817

\(^7\) *bianji bu* and *bianji weiyuanhui* entries in *XWXIMCD*, 106.

\(^8\) *Baoye Xingzheng* entry in *XWXIMCD*, 141.
and sub-edited by the editors within these, then submitted for the approval of the chief editorial office or editorial committee.

For example, the Peoples' Daily office in 1982 comprised news departments covering the subject areas of: domestic politics, industry and commerce, rural (affairs), science and education, literature and the arts, international (affairs). These and several other professional departments were subordinated to an editorial committee and finally to the chief editorial office. Of the remainder, the work of the theoretical and commentary departments has not been documented but may be guessed at. The qunzhong gongzuo (mass work) department was staffed by editors who dealt with submissions from the public; the jizhe bu (reporters' department) looked after the domestic news collecting bureaux based at various locations throughout China; and the Market editorial and News Front editorial were special departments engaged in producing respectively the Market newspaper and the professional magazine for journalists called News Front.9

The Guangming Daily, also a national news office under the direct leadership of the Central Committee, was organized similarly into the general subject areas of its intended sphere of influence - science, schools education, literature and the arts, international - and four others of journalists, qunzhong gongzuo (mass work), theoretical and commentary research.10 The staffing of a department depended upon the type of work required of it. For example, the tasks of the qunzhong gongzuo (mass work) department in the Economic Daily office were usually of an editorial nature

9 RMRB entry, XWNI 82, 197-8.
10 GMRB entry, XWNI 82, 199-200.
while the industrial department was staffed with more reporters, investigating and reporting news items.\textsuperscript{11}

The material with which news offices dealt changed constantly consistent with the frequent changes in political and administrative needs of the Party. The work of the news office could be divided into three stages: gathering by news reporting staff, (further) processing by editors, and distribution through one of two major channels - the public newspapers or the internal bulletins.

REPORTERS

News gathering was specifically the professional task of the reporters. The reporter was sent out to gather information and opinions and to write up his reports of what he heard and observed for the office. The term \textit{jizhe} used specifically, referred to the following-up and writing of stories. In 1976 it was: "news reporter - the specialized professional staff who deal with the gathering and reporting of news"\textsuperscript{12} and in 1981: "news reporter": specialized personnel in news enterprise organs who deal with the work of the collection of news by investigation and interviewing'.\textsuperscript{13} The reporters generally were responsible for investigation, interviewing people connected with stories,

\textsuperscript{11} from personal interview 1983. Note that the \textit{Economic Daily} had a chief editor, chief editorial office, and departments for industry and communications, finance and trade, information (xinxi), rural (affairs), mass work, science and technology, domestic politics, journalists. The paper had been called the \textit{China Finance and Trade Paper} until January 1983 when it underwent a reorganization and change of name. This was probably directly related to the disgrace, arrest and imprisonment of Li Guangyi who had been its chief editor. An Gang from the office of the \textit{People's Daily} took over as editor-in-chief.

\textsuperscript{12} XWX XCD, 1976.

\textsuperscript{13} Cihai Fence, 1981.
and subsequently writing up the article. If based at a regional or local jizhe zhan (bureau), the reporter would have some responsibility for liaison with stringers as well.

The role of the PRC reporters has never been solely to gather and write news material for the eyes of the public. Their major responsibility was to report to the office all new information, including that which was "not suitable for open publication or temporarily not suitable". What a reporter investigated and wrote up might be "distributed to the offices concerned, or used as reference materials for guest authors writing articles". Some of the stories might be selected for publication in the newspaper for the masses to read and learn from. Other parts of this material might be printed in the internal bulletins destined only for the eyes of political leaders and government officials.

NEWS SENSE

The reporter received assignments from the editorial department and gathered news using xinwen mingan (news sense). News sense was awareness of the most significant events and trends during the course of implementation of Party policies. This involved reporters being sure of their positions - through knowledge of current policies, having the support of senior editors, and having a correct lichang (stand-point) from which to investigate and phrase reports. PRC journalism was purposeful. It was government oriented. It was aimed at solving problems for the Party. In a

14 It is not quite clear who actually writes the internal reports, but one source reveals that even as late as 1987 journalists in some organizations had their quotas of internal reports to meet.

15 From Liu Binyan’s "The Inside News of the Newspaper" in Nieh Hualing’s translation, 411-464, this quote on 412.
1984 publication from Guangxi province, three journalists\(^\text{16}\) reminded readers that for effective reporting one's news sense must be continually increased and strengthened. The reporter's news sense depended very much on political awareness. News sense, particularly that part of it which provided ideological, theoretical and political soundness, should have been acquired in part during the reporter's or stringer's training. Daily sense of what the editors would accept came from experience of the routines in the news office, an understanding of the editors' requirements, and changes in political wind.

News sense was developed through several avenues. It could evolve from study of the major Party documents on specific policies, editorials from the Central Committee's major mouthpiece the *Peoples' Daily*, and the work *dongxiang* (directions) found in *xiaoxi* (news items) from important Central Committee meetings. If a Party member, the reporter had access to reports relayed down by the Party committee. When Central Committee or provincial committee level comrades came down for inspections of local cadres' work, the reporter was expected to promptly call on them and seek instructions. The reporter could also study the *yewu zhishi* (professional instructions) in the newspaper office\(^\text{17}\). According to Ye Shitao, listening to 'responsible comrades' could provide the clue to the Party's newest *lingdao yitu* (leaders' intention) or the *zhidao sixiang* (guiding ideology) for a


\(^{17}\) Sun Minghui, "How to Grasp the 'Climate'", 136-145 of *XWLC*, vol 2, Xinhua, 1983, 143. The avenues apply specifically here to journalists of the Xinhua News Agency.
certain work task. He also suggested that attention paid to documents, newspapers and other publications assisted the journalist to 'conscientiously digest the intention of the Party's directives and thus turn these into one's own "reportorial ideology"'.

News sense also meant knowing what was likely to be interesting to leaders. The highest form of news sense, of the politically ambitious PRC journalist, could be described as uncovering a 'good story' of interest internally to the Central Committee leadership. Reporting it through the internal bulletin made leaders aware of serious problems so they could choose to take action; coverage of such an important story might later also be allowed in the press. On the other hand, a publicly successful journalist would have developed a sense of what events would be published over his own byline.

Investigative journalism had to be directly relevant to Party needs. An investigating reporter was expected to be ideologically, theoretically and politically sound. An inappropriate attitude expressed by a journalist led to the charge, by Party leaders, of being politically unsound, and such reports could not be published in the newspaper. Carelessness during preparations for an investigative report suggested to a newspaper department head or the chief editor a questionable guardian (viewpoint) or kanfa (viewpoint). A good reporter, however, was seldom criticized for a bad lichang (standpoint).


ibid.
INVESTIGATION AND INTERVIEWING

A large part of the reporter's work was caifang (the collection of news by investigation and interviewing). The approach expected to be taken to those interviewed depended upon the reporter's rank, the classification or status of the interviewee and the subject of the investigation. Ai Feng in his 1982 treatise, On The Methods of Collecting News by Investigation and Interviewing, written for news gatherers, classified interviewees into four distinct types and described the method of approach to each type. The directions were highly moralistic and reflected that impartial investigation and reporting were not the major goals for the 1980s PRC reporter.

The first type of interviewee was a person judged to be "Approved of and Praisable" or someone "whose interests, stand-point and views were shared by the reporter". This interviewee's position fitted in with that of the reporter, who as an upholder of righteousness and correctness could judge the worth of the interviewee. Stories based on such interviews probably appeared in the newspapers as reports of model workers and other members of society held up to be emulated.

Ai Feng's second category covered people who did not "follow the correct path" but were "basically interested in the same things" as those maintained by the reporter. Where an interviewee disagreed "on some

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complex questions" he was to be "Criticized and Educated". A large part of searching for information and opinions to flesh out the story of an event or issue might involve interviewing people such as these. The third category was those who must be "Exposed and Censured", whose stories were to be used as lessons.

A fourth category of "Neutral Relations", those who neither disagreed nor agreed with the reporters, was included. These were apparently the majority and, "were there contradictions between interviewer and interviewee these did not appear during the course of the interview". It is likely that this fourth category was added after the reforms began in 1978, although it may have appeared in a limited form in the previous decade. After the political policy changes following the events of 1976 the reporters were no longer expected to view and portray all events strictly in black and white terms.

Much investigative journalism would focus on those people in the second and third categories and the situations in which they were involved. As an investigator, the reporter was both an ombudsman defending the citizens against administrative and political abuse and an intelligence gathering cadre for the Party-controlled government.

OBSTRUCTION BY OFFICIALS

Investigative reporters had some power but often experienced a lot of frustrations. Investigating the actions of one group of people - leaders or responsible cadres - whose interests might be jeopardized by too much revelation of their activities, could be fraught with obstacles and dangers. Like Party cadres sent to inspect or learn how lower level cadres were carrying out their responsibilities, investigating reporters could be met with active obstruction.
Certain counter-measures might be used by the visitee to hinder discovery of inconvenient facts, the reporting of these, and thus the eventual solution of the related problems as seen by the reporter and his superiors. When visiting a work unit or district government seat to understand the situation and deal with problems, three counter-measures might be employed: (1) the reporting back of a false state of affairs (to Party superiors), (2) silencing of interviewers or encouraging them to be less thorough, by treating them with great hospitality, and (3) the bestowal of gifts of foodstuffs and other consumer items on departing interviewers along with offers to make advantageous personal arrangements such as permanent residence registrations or jobs for offspring. Thus many matters might remain unexposed.

The investigative reporter might have information from other sources, contradicting that proffered by the cadres under investigation. If unbribable, the interviewers might go directly to interview lower level cadres and the common people to build a more complete picture of the situation. The enraged and or frightened officials might then resort to such methods of attack against interviewers as rumour-making amongst the masses, bringing false charges against them to the next higher level of authority (perhaps the interviewees' superiors) and the writing of anonymous letters about them. If those investigating had the support of their highly-placed boss - in other words editor, editorial committee or the Party Committee level to which the media office is responsible - then the above methods of obstruction would not succeed.

22 ibid., 5-6.
Apparently a visiting reporter arrived under cover. This method of investigation in theory was not promoted and only supposed to be employed on exceptional occasions. These were variously described as - "penetrating into enemy armies", "among hostile elements", when visiting "criminal elements", when a visitee refused to "co-operate" with reporters or simply when 'it was inappropriate to take the form of an overt journalistic visit'.

This secrecy might well have been used when the journalist interviewed people in the "Exposé and Censure" category.

**INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM IN PRACTICE**

Two accounts of the investigations carried out by journalists, in 1979 and 1980, illustrate the procedure followed and the obstructions encountered.

Wang Xianbin, a Shanxi (Province) Daily reporter wrote a letter which was published by the Peoples' Daily in December 1979. In it he described an assignment to investigate a 'problem' at the County level. The findings were reported back to the Standing Council of the County Committee, and the matter left in the officials' hands for the time being. The reporters advised the officials that they were not going to write an internal reference report or publish the story of the Committee's 'problem' in the newspaper yet, thus giving the County Committee time to solve the matter or 'correct' it. After this "correction" the story could be presented in a more positive light. Eight members of the Standing Committee had formally chengren (admitted their error) in that their method of employing people was in contradiction of current policy. Some months later, the 'problem' had not been corrected and

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23 bu shiyi XWXJMC, 101.
people affected by the officials' actions cynically believed the reporters had been bribed. Wang expressed this in terms commonly used: not only had the bureaucrats shielded one another but it seemed that guan wei jizhe (reporters were protecting the officials) while the officials fed the reporters.\(^\text{24}\) Perhaps Wang should have written an internal report even while leaving the solution of the matter in the hands of County level officials.

A reporter always had the option to write internal reference reports about leaders who had been heavily criticized by workers, if that were all one was confident to do. Indeed, the reporter was obliged to fanying (report) unresolved matters to the next highest level, in this case the provincial Party committee.\(^\text{25}\) The Party committee could then decide to send out its special investigators to look into the matter. It appears an internal reference report was not made to the Provincial Committee. It is more likely that he had at least reported the situation to the editors of the Shanxi Daily. There were insufficient facts in Wang's letter to indicate whether or not the editors were at fault for negligence. Perhaps this particular matter was insoluble. The local officials may have been corrupt or just overloaded with new and difficult demands being made by the recent changes in government policy from the Central Committee.

In April 1980, Zhang Wenzhi of the provincial Shaanxi Daily newspaper wrote in to the Peoples' Daily about the investigation of serious mismanagement in a coal-mine near Tongchuan City in Shaanxi. The letter demonstrated limitations in the power of the investigative reporter to solve

\(^{24}\) Wang Xianbin,"Caifang Yangcheng Xian weifan zhaogong zhengce yinlai de mafan" in RMRB, 1/12/79, 3.

problems by internal reporting, and the difficulty of being published. Zhang Wenzhi's relation of the coal-mine investigation provided insight into the procedures followed by investigative reporters sent to visit and gather information about 'problems' in carrying out Party policy at the local government level. It also described explicitly, political interference run by officials.

People from the area around Tongchuan had written letters to Provincial and Central Party committees and to national government ministries. These and visits from local people to those organizations indicated that a serious situation existed. Reporter Zhang Wenzhi went to the district to investigate. He called on the Secretary of the Tongchuan City Committee and the Deputy Secretary of the Bureau of Mines Party committee. He went out to the mine where he discovered the situation was very serious; he felt it required public baodao (reporting). He first sought the support of responsible members on the Shaanxi Provincial committee. One of the committee's Secretaries heard his brief account of the situation over the telephone and supported the reporter in making a thorough investigative baogao (report) directly to him. Before leaving the area, the reporter called on the Secretary of the City committee, as the Provincial Committee Secretary had suggested, to formally report back to the Tongchuan City committee. After three attempts to see the deputy Secretary and a time-lapse of ten days, the reporter had not been accommodated. He thus departed to the Provincial Committee with his materials. The Provincial Secretary, already aware of the obstructions, looked at the material Zhang Wenzhi had gathered and wrote his instructions on it permitting it to be written up as an internal report for circulation throughout the Province. The government organizations and Party organizations took steps to rectify the situation and transferred the official away from Yakou Coal-mine.
The editorial department of the newspaper planned to publicly report the matter as two consecutive stories. The first report, entitled 'Yakou Mine's Party Committee ignores civil matters, and the masses are intensely dissatisfied', was published in the Shaanxi Daily early in 1979. Clearing up the matter should then have proceeded smoothly. By April 1980, however, the Yakou Coal-mine official was back at the coalmine and the workers were being badly affected as before. The second planned report to fanying (reflect) the serious dereliction of duty and other questions about the Mine's leadership was withheld from publication.

After publication of the first report, people continued to lodge complaints with their superiors and wrote anonymous letters. The latter included criticisms of the reporter. The newspaper office temporarily had to delay publication of the second report until the Party Committee's working party had been to the Mine to solve the problem. Zhang Wenzhi wrote that 'Afterwards, for whatever reason [I] do not know, [but] the Provincial [Committee] did not send out a working group, [and] the second report fell through'. Instead, a working group was sent from the Tongchuan Bureau of Mines Party Committee to 'help the mine rectify its style of work' A wenguo zexi (critical self-examination) was written and supplied to the newspaper for fabiao publication. The newspaper's office prepared an item from this and wrote a duanping (short critical piece) about the mine secretary's acceptance of his errors. The editorial department then asked for the agreement of the Mine Bureau's committee to fabiao publication.

Eventually those manuscripts were discarded, unpublished, because it became obvious the mine's secretary had insincerely made his self-criticism.

The Secretary meanwhile had lodged complaints against the reporter accusing him of unjust treatment. The major responsible person of the Tongchuan Mines Bureau was also refused to take responsibility for the problem. While being unable to pick faults with the Shaanxi Daily's published report he clung to his story of not having examined the report prior to publication and shifted all blame to the reporter. Negative rumours circulated wildly about reporter Zhang Wenzhi, and even the qingcha bangongshi (office for investigations) of the Mines Bureau weigong (attacked) him.

The power of an investigative reporter could indeed be severely limited by officials with strong political and personal interests. When the reporters strove to investigate a problem of administration and write useful, appropriate reports, trying to assist the masses by exerting journalistic powers to bring about a solution, a lack of support from Party cadres made their goals impossible to achieve. The reporters risked earning a bad name and the suspicion of ordinary folk. They must sometimes have felt they were engaged in a thankless task. Obstructions such as those detailed above will always occur in investigative reporting in China. They are inherent in the system.

STRINGERS

Part-time, non-professional news stringers (tongxunyuan) have always been attached to a newspaper in extended networks throughout work units or geographical areas where the news office had interests or responsibilities. A Party Central Committee Decision in 194227 established

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27 Hong Yilong in XWNJ 1982, 56.
the stringer system\textsuperscript{29}. The news work unit or news office had a task called "liaison work", including the organization, development, training and liaison between the news offices\textsuperscript{30} and stringers.\textsuperscript{31} The stringers\textsuperscript{32} who were organized to work in wide 'networks' throughout the area of responsibility of the news office, frequently contributed background information and stories, and some of the news (or new intelligence) which ended up in the internal bulletins.

In 1943 the "Circular on Several Questions Concerning the Liberation Daily" issued by the CCP Central Committee's North-West Bureau ruled on the importance of 'propaganda departments at each level organizing the education of stringers'.\textsuperscript{33} The 1976 dictionary claimed that after the Cultural Revolution, news work units frequently held study classes for the training of these stringers.\textsuperscript{34} Similar courses had been held prior to the Cultural Revolution and after 1976.

In the 1980 Cihai, the definition of a stringer was: "organized but non-specialist news worker who frequently makes reports on situations, supplies opinions, selects and writes manuscripts for the news office, television station, radio station or news agency. The establishment of a correspondent

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{29} zhidu
\item \textsuperscript{30} jigou
\item \textsuperscript{31} tonglian gongzuo entry, XWXXCD, 44.
\item \textsuperscript{32} I have chosen not to use the translation correspondent as that applies to journalists based overseas.
\item \textsuperscript{33} Hong Yilong, XWNI 82, 56.
\item \textsuperscript{34} XWXXCD, 43.
\end{itemize}
network is an important aspect of proletarian news enterprises' connection with the masses, of the implementation of the mass line.  

Stringers reported back on the general state of affairs in their areas to the newspaper staff, supplying background information and leads for news stories as well as themselves investigating and writing up items. In the 1976 *Journalism Dictionary*, stringers were referred to as workers, peasants and soldiers, being: "reporting personnel who were not withdrawn from production duties [but] maintained a fixed relationship with a news work unit". In other words, they were working at jobs other than journalism and therefore expected to be more closely in touch with such affairs. They also mixed with people and observed events that reporters or editors did not. According to the same dictionary entry, the main tasks of these part-time reporters were to: "make reports on the situation" to the news work unit, supply opinions and expectations of the masses, [and to] collect [news] and write up manuscripts of the reports. Frederick Yu asserted in 1964 that the stringer network "above all, ... is supposed to serve as the eyes and ears of the press and Party in every area of the nation's life".

These gatherers were a large source of leads and information about public attitudes. In 1986, Shanghai's *Liberation Daily* had 3,200 of these stringers attached to 'some 300' staff reporters. the Shanghai Peoples' Radio

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35 Cihai fence, Jan 1980, 32.
36 baodao
37 XWXXCD, 42-43.
38 baodao gaojian XWXXCD, 42.
Station had 5,000. The stringers had a twofold role in disseminating news and opinions between the State and the masses via the news office: "The state can swiftly relay downwards advanced thinking to the masses through the stringer network, and bring the situation and opinions from the masses to the attention of the State".

NEWS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The news office also received large numbers of letters - in some cases over a thousand a day - from members of the public. The People's Daily apparently received from 1,500 letters per month in 1977 reaching 8,000 per month by December, 20,000 in March 1978 and well above 40,000 for the month of June 1978. In 1982 it received an average daily rate of 1,700 letters and articles daily.

The local Beijing Daily's 1981 annual receipt of letters and "contributions from the masses" totalled 70,000 to 80,000. The explanation in the journalistic world for the increase in letters was the "upsets of the previous period which had given the masses a lot to complain about and

\[40\] Qian Weifan, The Role and Contributions of Non-professional Correspondents in Chinese Media, delivered at the Canberra Conference on International Communication in December 1986, 1.

\[41\] yijian

\[42\] XWNJ, 82, 90.

\[43\] China Reconstructs, Oct 78, 4.

\[44\] From "A Brief Introduction to People's Daily" pamphlet published in 1983 by the Peoples' Daily Newspaper office - it received in 1982 "...621,194 letters and articles from workers, peasants, soldiers and intellectuals. The average number of letters and articles received per day was 1,702."

\[45\] XWNJ 1982, 215.
created many problems which needed to be solved\textsuperscript{46}. The Guangming Daily received a daily average of 100-300 letters per month from 1978 up until 1981\textsuperscript{47}. Large numbers of the letters sent in went unpublished, because the main task of the masses' work department was the sorting of this news for other purposes. As Gan Xifen pointed out: the real advantage of readers' letters lies not in their publication but in their use for understanding the mood (of the people) and for providing leads for journalistic investigation\textsuperscript{48}.

These submissions from the public were sorted by a department staffed mainly by editors, the qunzhong gongzuo (mass work) department. Nie Meichu in 1983 stated that editors engaged in this work "must have a high degree of political sensitivity and a wide field of vision"\textsuperscript{49} in order to judge the importance of a letter. Letters to the news office praised, criticized, accused or appealed for intercession. Piping xin (critical letters) tended to be the great bulk of letters received\textsuperscript{50}. In 1979 the majority of the letters received at the Guangming Daily office were critical\textsuperscript{51}. The staff there found that following up complaints was often obstructed by those criticized. Particularly when the faults, improprieties and poor work performance of cadres were the objects of criticism, difficulties and hindrances to

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[\textsuperscript{46}] Dai Bang, Qian Xinbo, Lu Huimin, \textit{Xinwenxue Jiben Zhishi Jiangzuo}, Volume 2, 441-442.
\item[\textsuperscript{47}] Wang Zhongren in \textit{Guangming Ribao Tongxun}, internal bulletin of the Guangming Daily newspaper publishing house, 10/1981.
\item[\textsuperscript{48}] Gan Xifen, \textit{Xinwen Lilun Jichu}, 1982, 159.
\item[\textsuperscript{50}] Dai Bang, Qian Xinbo, Lu Huimin, ibid.
\item[\textsuperscript{51}] \textit{GMRBTX} 10, 1981.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
investigation increased. As the *China News Analysis* commentators in Hong Kong pointed out, no-one liked to be criticized and especially not cadres with power.

There were three major categories of critical letters. The "letters of appeal to higher authorities" exposed and criticized Party and State cadres (such as immediate superiors) for bureaucratic work-style (hesitation to make decisions for example), serious cases of abusing a position of power for personal gain, retaliation against unsatisfied masses (such as persecution, humiliation, framing of false cases) and so on. Letters of appeal for help from related departments to help solve problems (frequent in local papers) pointed to the greatest problems in the city (or other) government's work. A third category comprised letters from people criticizing others for the undermining of customs and morals in the society. The Mass Work Department of the *China Youth* newspaper office went so far as to claim that the content of letters received included the raising of "every kind of political viewpoint and different opinions on current policies."
The general areas of subject matter covered by the letters sent in to the
*Guangming Daily* were: placement and employment of intellectuals, working
conditions, living standards; protection of cultural relics, environmental
pollution; misappropriation of educational funds, the beating up of teachers,
higher education examinations and discipline; cadre bureaucratism,
retaliation, extravagance and waste, securing advantages through pull or
influence, trying to pull strings and other unhealthy tendencies. The review
*China Reconstructs* commented that the letters received by the *People's Daily*
in 1977 were at first "relatively mild complaints - how loudspeakers of
public address systems disturbed school lessons and quiet hours, bad bus
service, the poor quality of some consumer goods" and touched on "deeper
problems" in 1978, such as "demands to redress grievances imposed under
the misrule of Lin Piao and the 'gang of four' or to rehabilitate people
persecuted or jailed on false charges...wrongdoing on the part of leaders and
...below-standard industrial goods that had resulted in heavy losses for the
people".

To understand the type of news contained in these submissions, it is
necessary to look at why members of the public made them and also at why
the Party encouraged the submissions.

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60 *GMRBTD* op.cit, 10/81.

61 *China Reconstructs*, October 1978.
READERS' REASONS

Journalists maintained that people wrote to the news office because they believed they might receive assistance from it.\(^\text{62}\) Ai Feng stated that the interviewees (and the public) sometimes wished the journalist to mediate for them, putting their opinions and demands to concerned levels of Party committees or government offices for the practical resolution of problems. That implied that journalists were often seen as troubleshooters who could bypass the usual hierarchical channels of authority to bring a problem to the attention of bodies up to and including the Central Committee. They were thus considered like ombudsmen provided for resolution of issues when human error or corruption in government offices blocked the usual "democratic channels".\(^\text{63}\) Those whose reactions Wang Xianbin described certainly had expected the journalists to help solve their hardships.\(^\text{64}\)

The Readers' Letters and Visits entry in a 1976 news dictionary stated: "Readers write in or come personally to the newspaper [office]s, news agencies, and broadcasting stations, reflecting the problems and circumstances of current real struggles and each aspect of social life, to raise critical suggestions and to ask for the solving of problems".\(^\text{65}\). That is, the raising and solving of specific subjects of dispute in society on behalf of people who have little recourse to the power to change situations which they

\(^{62}\) Chen Chongshan, "How Does the Chief Editor Grasp Readers' Letters Work" (A Visit with the Liberation Daily Chief Editor, Wang Wei), in \textit{XWZX}, No. 9, 1981, 14-16.

\(^{63}\) Ai Feng, op. cit., 273-277.

\(^{64}\) see narration of Wang's investigation on page 89 of this chapter.

\(^{65}\) \textit{XWXXCD}, 1976.
find unpleasant or intolerable. Thus the journalist could be used as a channel for correcting mistakes of lower level cadres.

PARTY ENCOURAGEMENT

Investigation of readers' letters as well as publication of some in the mass media was considered, in Chinese Communist journalism theory, to be a part of the general supervision of lower-level work of organs and cadres of the State and Party. The 1976 journalism dictionary stated that: "Readers' letters, whether reflecting individual or mass cries and suggestions, criticize and supervise the work and the cadres, thus being the peoples' right to be their own masters"66.

It is part of one of the four major functions assigned to the press by Marxist-Leninist theory - that of "mass critic and controller"67. Lenin considered the press to be best suited for implementation of the principle of criticism and self-criticism in the public sphere68. The criticism in the press could not be directed at the "foundations, principles, organs or high representatives"69 of the system in a Communist Party-run nation, according to the expert on the press of the USSR and East European nations, Antony Buzek. It may, however, sometimes touch upon the faulty operation of organs, because although it "must only criticize with the Party's approval"70,

66 ibid.
68 Buzek, ibid., 52
69 Buzek, ibid., 63
70 ibid.
it may surmount the usual bounds in cases where the Party chooses to make an exception.

A new era in Chinese politics had begun in the late 1970s and the Party leaders required that people’s grievances be directed against the previous leadership. The new leaders signalled to the masses that their grievances were to be heard and mismanagements by the previous authorities would be dealt with. News offices were directed to note and investigate reports and complaints. Consequently, large numbers of letters making criticisms and hoping for assistance in redressing wrongs or solving problems arrived at the news offices during 1977-1978 and on into the 1980s. The national paper China Youth claimed an average monthly receipt of 43 thousand letters in 1981.

EDITING

At the news office the manuscripts produced by the news gatherers were dealt with by the editors. Generally these were sorted into four piles: keyong gao (usable), beiyong gao (put on hold), dai yanjiu gao (awaiting further consideration) or buyong gao (handle with care - including some for the internal bulletins and those not good enough to use). Some of the manuscripts might need editing before publication and some comprehensive rewriting.

The editor sorted on the basis of professional acumen and his highly developed political yujianxing (forecasting sense). Even more than other


72 Qiu Peihuang et. al., Xinwen Zhishi, Sichuan Peoples' Publishing House, 1981, 202-203
full-time journalistic staff of the news office, the editor had to be closely attuned to the political barometer and fully briefed on current Party policies and programmes. The 1980 Cihai definition of editor was one "engaging in organizing, examining, editing and selection, processing and tidying of manuscripts".\(^73\) Of course, this definition and a similar one in the 1983 Journalism Dictionary relate mainly to work in preparing manuscripts for the public newspaper. All editorial staff were probably involved in examination, selection and passing on manuscripts for the leadership network as well, as intimated by the Sichuan book’s comments on the 'handle with care manuscripts'.\(^74\) Certain editors, however, were more involved than others, probably dealing specifically with the compilation of the internal bulletins.

In the 1983 dictionary of journalism there is also an entry for neiwu (internal matters) editors whose responsibilities included the souji (gathering together), yanjiu (research into) and zhengli (putting in order) of reports on the "situation" for internal distribution.\(^75\)

EDITORS' HANDLING OF READERS LETTERS

All work carried out by the mass work departments of news offices was part of the news selection and dissemination process, though material eventually selected for publication by these editors received the widest circulation.

The news gathered by the mass work departments of the news offices was sorted for circulation to several audiences: after processing to the public,

\(^73\) Cihai Fence, 1981.

\(^74\) Qiu Peihuang, op. cit., 202-203.

\(^75\) XWX JMCD, 105
through bulletins prepared for the leadership, individually to departments which might be expected to handle the difficulties reported, or, with somewhat sinister ramifications, directly to the Public Security Bureau.

The news office could send on the letter with a request for prompt action to an individual administrative department of the government. One method of news dissemination originating from citizens was for letters to be passed on to the official units concerned while retaining a brief record of the action in the news office. Letters to a news office complaining about lack of action taken by a government department might be passed on to that department with the newspaper's request that action to solve it be taken swiftly. The news workers were supposed to inform the reader that they had passed the letter on.

The researchers in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in their first comprehensive work on news practices in 1983, touched briefly on several problems encountered during the processing of letters. When a reader wrote of personal difficulties the office was supposed to reply assuring the citizen that the paper's mass work editors "cared about his difficulties" and, presumably, were taking action. Piping xin (critical letters) had to be treated with care. The facts were to be checked and the matter followed up for its appropriate solution. Letters written anonymously were to be analysed carefully for the reasons of their

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76 Dai Bang, Qian Xinbo, Lu Huimin, Xinwenxue Jiben Zhishi Jiangzuo, Volume 2, 441-442.
77 ibid., 441-442.
78 ibid.
79 ibid.
anonymity. If the criticism or exposure in these were justified they were to be followed up in the same way as signed critical letters. Once letters had been through the selection process, and subsequent reports been offered to the persons criticized for their comments, the editorial department of the news office had the right to decide on publication. "The Central Committee has ruled that newspapers [ie their offices] must seek the opinion of the criticized one, [and] notify [him]; but it has not ruled that the examination, approval and permission of the criticized one must be obtained. The right of decision to publish or not rests with the newspaper office..."

The news office staff could also look into many matters which were not the concern of just one government office or work unit. One example of this was the case reported by Sun Huiqing in *News Front* in 1981. A critical letter was edited into a "galley proof" and sent out to five concerned units for investigation. Two of these, the Central Committee of the Party and the Procuratorate suggested the letter not be published. Two other units, the Forestry Bureau and the Forestry District Public Security Bureau said the report was true and should be published.

The ultimate authority for publication in the press, however, theoretically rested with the editorial department of the news office.

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80 ibid.


82 Jianchayuan

83 Sun Huiqing, "Let Readers' Letters be 'Frequent Guests' on Page One", in *XWZX*, No. 8, 1981, 10-11.
Final authority for the circulation of the letters' contents was held also by the editorial department of the news office although apparently the editor-in-chief might be involved.\footnote{XWZX No. 9, 1981. 14-16.} An example of the letter-handling process involved the scarcity of matches for sale nationwide in 1981 and 1982. After receiving many letters, journalists visited the light industry departments to ascertain the situation and made both public and internal reports. Letters raising this problem continued to arrive and the relevant departments of the Party Central Committee were "always discussing" it. As a result, in 1982 the masses' work department of the People's Daily office sent out one hundred letters directly enquiring of basic-level commercial departments and match factories. It also sent journalists to two provinces to question consumers and visit the shops and match factories. The information gathered was compiled into "A Summary of Readers' Letters", "Analysis of the Hundred Letter Investigation" and "Investigative Reports" written by journalists, then sent to the next highest level of Party authority and also "published in internal publications promoting the solving of the issue".\footnote{XWZX No. 11, 1983, 17.}

**HANDLING OF HYPERCRITICAL SUBMISSIONS**

In late 1978, the official stand was that letter-writers were generally to be treated leniently: people who had written letters incorrectly because of the previous government's direction were not to have their letters and complaints regarded as "sinister"; complaints about cadre's abuses and personal injustices were to be protected and supported; angry letters which could be identified as the work of people who had only limited understanding of
situations were not to be labelled as "opposing the Party and leadership"; letters expressing different viewpoints about newspaper articles or theoretical problems were a part of "normal and permissible" political life, even if "one-sided or wrong"; anonymous letters which were obviously unsigned from fear of retaliations were not to be regarded as "engaging in conspiracies". The main message of a People's Daily contributing commentator's article was that criticism in large doses was to be encouraged for a while.86

In 1983 news office staff were expected to "decide carefully what was legitimate criticism and what was not" before handing over letters to the police87, so there were obviously limits to the level of criticism allowed. The academic work on journalism produced by senior researchers in the Academy of Social Sciences advised the careful handling of gongji xing (accusatory) letters. Those letters containing views suggesting the authors were anti-Party or the State, (described as counter-revolutionary), had to be handed over to the Public Security Bureau88. The authors of that academic work did not detail what contents were to be regarded as anti-Party or anti-State, probably because these changed with the varying leadership alignments and specific policies of the Party at any time.

The business of handing over letters received at a news office to the Public Security personnel raises the question of infringement of freedom of correspondence. This is a freedom guaranteed to Chinese citizens in the State Constitutions of 1978 and of 1982. The definition of anti-Party, anti-State or treasonable or counter-revolutionary expressions of opinion was not well

86  Peoples Daily, 4/9/77.
87  Dai Bang, op. cit.
88  Dai Bang, op. cit.
defined. Although the new leadership’s policies had been somewhat relaxed from 1978 onwards, by 1983 this restriction had not been lifted. What the Party rulers would allow to be said outright or suggested at any particular time was open to interpretation.

The offices which produced newspapers were large collection houses of information and opinions. News and investigative reports were gathered into the news offices by the professional staff. Leads for further reports were obtained from members of the public and tongxunyuan (stringers). The reports were prepared according to the professional sense of the reporters and editors, after consideration of the political implications. Investigative reporting was often carried out under some difficulty as is described in the examples which were described by journalists working in Shanxi and Shaanxi. Journalists did meet with obstructions in the gathering of news whether it was intended for an internal report or a public report. Some of the results of their efforts were printed in special bulletins for internal dissemination restricted to the leadership; others appeared in the pages of the external newspapers published for the eyes of both the 'masses' and the leaders. Journalists sometimes followed up these complaints on behalf of the public, but also handed over letters to government departments or, on occasion, the Public Security Bureau.
CHAPTER THREE: THE PROFESSIONAL JOURNALIST

Before looking in detail at either the news reporting produced and distributed by the news offices for restricted circulation, or the production of news stories for the newspapers, it is important to examine the background of the news office staff. The way in which they think and behave determines to a large extent the output of the news offices. News exists in the minds of men, through their observations of human and natural events and their interpretations of these. The gathering of news into Chinese news offices appears to have been quite selective and coloured depending upon what the gatherers saw as important. The journalists and editors were affected by their own attitudes and the culturally specific values of their society. Their activities were also influenced by the expectations of those who ultimately ran and controlled the news offices. This chapter will examine the general nature of training undergone by news staff, and at the professional codes which describe both their ideal behaviour and the Party's expectations of their work.

The Chinese journalists were expected by the authorities to operate only in collusion or concert with the government and never in an adversary position, the underlying assumption being that the government always acted in the interests of the populace. An authority from the CASS Journalism Research Institute speaking to Australian journalists in 1983 said: "Chinese newspaper [office]s are not pitted against the Government because they share common interests and strive for a common goal". He said further that journalism is seen, in the PRC, as "a bridge between the Government and the people, helping the two to communicate with one another".1

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1 Qian Xinbo, Developments in Chinese Journalism During the Last Two Years, paper presented at the Australia-China second Joint Press Seminar, Canberra, 22/11/83, 5.
Chinese journalists, through their daily news collection in the news offices, assisted the political leadership in governing PRC citizens in two major ways. One was to provide the Party leadership with recent intelligence, indicating where a policy was being poorly administered or enabling leaders to identify the shortcomings of local application of a policy. Chinese journalists and editors also participated in the preparation of propaganda, and the reporting of news and commentary to the public through the newspapers and broadcasts. How they collected news and intelligence depended a great deal on the values instilled in them during their training and by rules made for them by the Party.

TRAINING

Journalists in China were provided with ideological and political education as well as training in professional skills. Their training could be separated into four categories, if one takes the description of leading writer Lan Hongwen: ideological, theoretical, political, and professional. The ideological content was not elaborated upon. The political training involved cultivating awareness of the *si xiang jiben yuanze* (four basic principles), maintenance of political unanimity with the Party's Central Committee, the cultivation of sensitivity to changes in the directions of the

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2 The training of journalists in all socialist systems, as pointed out by Chanchal Sarkar, has always included ideological teaching and discussion of the place and responsibilities of the journalist within his socialist society. It has included full-time courses, correspondence courses, refresher courses and time spent in Party schools. Chanchal Sarkar, *Journalists in Socialist Society*, Bangalore University Press, Bangalore, 1975, 6.

3 More detail in chapter 5 on page 169.
political winds, and a long-sighted view of politics. Theoretical education included the study of Marxist-Leninist and related works which the journalist would use in propagating and interpreting the policies, lines and directions of the CCP. The journalist had to learn specific professional skills - the crafts of news investigation and writing. Another area of the journalist's education, particularly those who attended formal tertiary courses, was a broad general exposure to many academic subject areas, including literature, and those subjects which would enable them to better understand people such as sociology and psychology.

The training of journalists in tertiary institutions was designed to provide them with a range of attributes, according to the Annual of Chinese Journalism, which supported the comments of Lan Hongwen. The graduates were expected to have a basic grasp of newspaper, broadcast or television news-writing skills, a solid basis of Marxist-Leninist theory and Mao Zedong Thought, and familiarity with the Party's general principles and specific policies. Certain principles, perhaps those included in the ideological part of their education, which training should have instilled in them included: the Four Basic Principles, the guardian (viewpoints) of the proletarian class, of the labouring masses, and of dialectical materialism. Furthermore, they were expected to emerge from training, "healthy in body, with an ardent love of the socialist motherland, possessing the high ethical qualities and spirit for serving the modernization of the society, and capable of taking part in the building of the motherland and the protection of the motherland". The supplementary training programmes for news workers all followed a similar

5 Summarized from the descriptions of courses under the individual school entries in XWNJ 82.
philosophy.

The journalists and editors of each news office in the 1980s had a mixture of backgrounds - of length and type of experience and training - ranging from short courses and on-the-job experience to various longer courses at tertiary level. Most of the journalists working in the PRC in the 1980s have been through one or more of those professional training courses outlined below.

Hong Yilong, of the Central Committee's Propaganda Department's News Bureau, listed the various sorts of training provided or supervised by the Party for workers in news offices since 1942. It is worth noting that the participants were referred to as news cadres, and included people who would not work in the news offices but elsewhere in the propaganda apparatus of the Party. In the war years prior to 1948, training was mainly 'on-the-job' and through short courses. During the 1940s at various times, short training courses for news cadres and journalism schools were held, most notably in Yenan's China Women's University News Class, at the Huazhong College for Professional News Training, in the Zhong Yuan University News Department, and at the Su Nan College for Professional News Training.

A lot of key, leading staff members in the new offices under Party and government auspices throughout China in the 1980s, came out of a 1948 "news cadre" training course conducted for Party-selected university students in the Western Hills outside Beijing in 1948. During the same year Hu Qiaomu in the Ping Shan District of Hubei Province conducted night

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6 Hong Yilong, "Survey of the News Education Enterprises of New China", 56-59, 38, of XWNJ 82, here 56. Note that throughout Hong's article he uses the term cadres to describe news staff.

7 Hong Yilong referred to the organizations as 'political propaganda organs' jiguan
classes for people working with news who were leaders and editors of Xinhua News Agency's Central Office editorial department.  

In July 1949 in Shanghai, the Huadong (East China) News Academy was set up, and run by the leadership of the Party's East China Bureau's Propaganda Department until 1951. Young "people's news work cadres", in two batches totalling about 700 people, were trained next to the working personnel of newspaper offices and broadcasting stations recently taken over by the Party.  

Meanwhile in Beijing, the Beijing News School was set up under the General News Office of the Central Peoples' Government.

During the early period of the PRC, regular tertiary education for news work was organized in the pre-Liberation university schools of journalism. Students were given courses in Marxist-Leninist political theory and heard reports and lectures from the Party's "journalism cadres". In 1952, some schools were closed down and others amalgamated as dictated by a nationwide plan to revise journalism education. The leading organs for Party propaganda matters then required the schools to add the teaching of 'advanced experience' from the USSR to the curriculum. In the 1950s and 1960s education for journalists was carried out in universities and part-time classes. After the 1966-1970 disruptions of the Cultural Revolution classes were resumed in tertiary institutions with the emphasis on training people from non-intellectual backgrounds - workers, peasants and soldiers.

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8 Hong Yilong, ibid., 56. There may have been other courses conducted at this time that were not highlighted in this article.

9 Hong Yilong, ibid., 57.

10 ibid.

11 In 1954, in a CC Politburo passed "CCPCC jueyi Resolution On Improving Newspaper Work" a specific rule was specially made on the fostering and training of news cadres. Further details of the 50s in Hong's article. XWNJ 82, 57
Since 1977 the emphasis in journalism education has been much more oriented towards raising professional standards and making journalists better educated and more accomplished as interviewers and writers whatever their personal background. Three forms of training for news personnel or "education in news work" were conducted after 1977: tertiary courses, postgraduate training which included research, and the "cultivation of news cadres at their posts" or short courses for working news personnel. These involved training for all aspects and levels of news and news-related propaganda work.12

According to a student from the 1977 intake at Beijing University, students had four streams to their tertiary training, covering a period of four years full-time study. One course component were the common courses13, studied by all humanities university students. The common courses included Classical Chinese language, Modern Chinese language, the History of Chinese Literature, History of European Literature, Chinese History, Philosophy, Political Economy, Elementary Natural Science, History of the Chinese Communist Party, a foreign language, sport, and the History of Modern Chinese literature. Professional courses for students of journalism were News Theory, Collection of News by Investigation and Interviewing, Newswriting, Newspaper Editing, Reading and Translation of Newspapers, News Photography, History of Chinese News, History of Foreign Newspapers, and Special Topics in News Theory14. The students also did professional fieldwork attached to a news office, twice during the four years for a total of half a year.

12 ibid
13 gonggongke
14 private source
The courses taught to the new generation of young journalists thus imparted a mixture of professional skills, politics, general knowledge and foreign languages. The schools trained people to be journalists and editors of ‘news work units’ such as newspaper offices, news agencies, radio stations and television stations, and also to do "propaganda and reporting work" in the bumen (offices) of the Party and the government.15

By 1980-81 there were thirteen tertiary institutions16 offering courses of from three to four years full-time duration. The courses were held in national or 'key' universities such as the Peoples' University (which took over journalism training from Beijing University after 1981), and Shanghai's Fudan University, Jinan University (which accepted overseas Chinese into its courses), the CASS Postgraduate Institute's Journalism Department and the Beijing Broadcasting Academy, and in several regional institutions including an after-hours school called the Shanxi Sparetime News Academy.

Some young Hong Kong journalists divided up China's tertiary level journalism courses into three components - political theory, the core course, and the basic course - in an article published in Hong Kong in 1981, "Journalism Education in China's Universities since 1978".17 According to this, the basic course was for general knowledge and the core course for professional skills training and knowledge about the professions. The authors found, through making a statistical comparison of the proportions of basic knowledge training and political theory components of courses offered

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15 refer to entries for each school in XWNI 82.

16 counted from entries in XWNI 82.

17 see article by students of CUHK's Department of Journalism and Communication, Cheung Kit-fung, Chow Wai-sheung and Yim Pui-hang; published in The Asian Messenger, Spring 1982, Volume 6, No. 1, 61-68. The interview was originally published in Ming Pao Yuekan in Chinese.
in two of the four major journalism schools in 1980-81, that the basic course comprised a greater proportion of the education than did political theory (Beijing University 56% basic and 20% political; Jinan University 44% basic and 19.1% political). When the authors were visiting in 1980-81 they judged from their different perspective that the four major journalism schools did not pay enough attention to the importance and development of social science.

CODE OF ETHICS

The PRC journalist was expected to be a conscientious professional with strong personal Communist values, well-trained in the duties of reporting in the interests of the Party-run State. The ideal behaviour of the journalist has also been described in a Code of Ethics, printed in a book produced by the CASS Institute of Journalism Research. The ethics may have been developed using the Rules for Journalists laid down by the Party, to which we will turn shortly, but they do not spell out the duties of writing carefully chosen reports for the public or supplying intelligence to the leadership. The Code in 1983 outlined a publicly adopted set of values, whereas the Rules were maintained as an internal document for restricted circulation. The Ethics provide a view of the public expectations of a good professional PRC journalist.

The Code read:

"1: be loyal to one's country, having deep love for the Party, and deep love for socialism; 2: dedicate oneself wholeheartedly to the service of the people; 3: go deep into the realities of life, immerse oneself amongst the masses, insist upon investigation and research, and proceed in everything...

18 quanxin quanyi wei renmin fuwu, originally used in a speech (or other) by Mao Zedong, during the anti-Japanese War, in memorial for Zhang Side.
from reality; 4: speak factually, speak honestly, and oppose 'the false, the exaggerated, and the empty' 19; 5: insist upon the truth20, and do battle with all phenomena which harm the interests of the people; 6: don't seek personal fame and gain, and consciously resist unhealthy trends and evil practices; 7: be modest and prudent, struggle hard21, and unite to help each other; 8: be both red and expert22, study conscientiously, and work diligently and conscientiously"23.

Clause number one was a common ethic required of most citizens in the PRC, whatever profession they practised. Clause two stated that the journalist should be a servant of the people. He did this through playing an ombudsman-like role24. Clause three could be interpreted as "probe society to learn how the government's orders are being carried out and the successes and failures of each". Immersing oneself amongst the masses and thorough investigation have been constant problems for journalists in the PRC. They were intellectuals and daily engaged in writing rather than being involved in

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19 I have translated shuo zhenhua as speak factually and shuo shihua as speak honestly, though they may mean essentially the same thing and be both included for emphasis. This and the exhortations to jiang zhenhua, fandui nongxu zuojia, fandui "kelikong" zuofeng, and not to chui niu shuohuang are expressions of the battle journalists face in striving to be both politician and 'scientist' at the same time. They must try to serve politics where truth is often not important, and factual reporting of information (serving objective reality) for the achievement of practical goals.

20 zhenli, the philosophical truth.

21 From slogan jianku fendou ziligengsheng, originally used in 1941 or 1942 at Yenan. Then in 1958 during the GLF when China was no longer to rely on the USSR.

22 Red meant to become politically qualified, and expert meant to become professionally qualified.


24 The emphasis here was on the 'people' served by the journalist rather than the "Party and the people" in the Rules, in Xinwen Ziliao, 1st Aug 1981, No. 3, internal publication of the Masses' Daily Journalism Research Institute.
the day-to-day problems encountered by the subjects of their reports. Some of the difficulties of writing realistic appraisals of events and people were overcome through the use of the stringer network which is described later in this chapter. One description from the 1980s categorizes pre-1978 reporting and editing as "false, exaggerated and empty". Political pressures had caused journalists to report for expediency, thus clause four exhorted them to be factual.

According to Clause 5 the journalist must uphold the truth, that was, the ideological truth decided by the Chinese Communist Party. "Phenomena which harmed the interests of the people" in practice were determined by the Party, on behalf of the people. This proviso of the peoples' interests might allow leeway for the journalist to write according to individual interpretation of those dictates, but subsequent publication in practice was rare. The journalist was expected to strive as the Party directed. The emphasis here was on the 'people' served by the journalist rather than the Party or the State, whereas in the Rules Party involvement was directly stated. Clause six could apply to ethics for professional journalists elsewhere in the world, except that "unhealthy trends" and "evil practices" were those habits and behaviour which the Party officially opposed.

Clause seven addressed the appropriately humble attitude expected of the journalist, and meant he must assume nothing and regard all people from different ranks and walks of life as possible sources of useful information. His job was to learn all that there could be learnt and report selected information to the appropriate audience. The journalist was finally expected to maintain theoretical and political knowledge and professional skills according to Clause 8.

The writers from CASS summarized the above ethics into the
following four points. Journalists were expected to uphold the "correct political fangxiang (orientation)" and "dare to uphold zhenli (the philosophically-based truth). News reports had to be true and correct. Newsmen should wholeheartedly serve the people without seeking personal fame and gain. Finally, all news workers were to zunshou (observe) Party discipline and the laws of the state, at all times strictly safeguarding State secrets.

The Chinese outline of behaviour detailed in the Code was probably produced both to 'attempt to diminish status ambivalence and anxiety' and as a 'prescription for proper conduct' in the performance of tasks as its counterpart was in one western society. It included moral attitudes, which embodied the values allowed or endorsed by the Party and 'reflect(ed) community consensus', as it was reached in the way peculiar to the PRC. In China, professional ethics were considered different from those adhered to in other societies. As socialists, ideally the Chinese were expected to pursue their profession's work ethics in a way which overcame "individualism", and the "small-group mentality", and "guildism" and egalitarianism" which were seen as evils of other socio-political systems.

The basic principle of their Communist ethics or morality was "collectivism", the main norms of which were listed as: ardent love of the people, ardent love of the socialist motherland, the communist attitude to labour, the

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25 Zhive Daode Guangbo Jiangzuo. Dai Bang was deputy president of Beijing Journalism Society, 105-111

26 Henry Mayer's remarks on the Australian Journalists' Association 1944 Code of Ethics could well apply also to the Chinese listings of rules and ethics, Mayer, 203.

27 Australia.

28 quoted from Mayer

cherishing of public property, an ardent love of science, and staunch adherence to zhenli (the philosophical truth). These journalists within the Chinese news offices were expected to practise socialist ethics in the exercise of their professions.

The Code of Ethics enumerated in this publication, however, was not as detailed as the Rules for journalists and was slanted in a way more acceptable to general readership. Broadly divided into general professional morality and political requirements, professional morality was covered by clauses 3, 4, 6 and 7 of the Code of Ethics, and the political requirements were dealt with in clauses 1, 2 and 5.

RULES LAID DOWN BY THE PARTY

The Party laid down a separate set of Rules for Journalists detailing the roles which it wanted them to play. Early in 1981 news work units (for example newspapers and broadcasting stations) studied a draft set of ten jizhe shouze (Rules for Journalists) circulated internally by the News Bureau of the CCP Propaganda Department. This document was not circumspect about service of the Party and included the specific task of the news office staff to report intelligence to the Party leadership, a role which continues to be semi-secret.

The listing was both a political document, incorporating the specific political requirements of the Party, and an officially dictated professional code. It was presented as a "draft" and incorporated the political slogans current at that time. An internal bulletin of the Masses' Daily News Research

30 ibid., 10. truth is as defined by the ideology of the CCP
Institute published the text of the Rules, which revealed that Chinese journalists must behave like good Party members, present the policies of the Party to the population, and pass on news from the population into the leadership. The requirements for journalists working in news offices were set out in ten clauses.

The first part of Rules clause no. 1 reads:

"In one's work consciously maintain political unanimity with the Party's Central Committee...".

The journalist had to be constantly in touch with the goals and expectations, and the political changes, of the Central Committee. In the transcript of a speech interpreting the Rules, published in the same bulletin, senior national media man, Wang Yi, emphasized that journalists must "unconditionally" maintain this political unanimity, accepting that the current composition of the Central Committee was the best possible. They should, therefore, believe in it and support it. He implied that many journalists had misgivings about the leadership and the policies they were required to publicize. As he spoke to the gathering of Sichuan journalists he referred to what Sichuanese had been through under other leaderships and the vast improvements set in train by the new leadership two years previously. The most important problem in news work as he saw it, was to ensure that journalists adhered to Party principles. The 'crisis of faith' in the Party affecting the political climate of the time, as Philip Short has described and

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31 Xinwen Ziliao, op. cit.
32 Maintenance of political unanimity is a complex matter. Aspects of this were dealt with in the sections on news sense, pp 66-68, editing, pp 85-86; and other factors will be addressed on pp 141-2 and in parts of Chapter 5.
33 Xinwen Ziliao, 5.
analysed, in his work comparing the Soviet Union and China,\textsuperscript{34} obviously had reached well into the ranks of journalists and editors.

Political unanimity with the centre, he explained, also meant not following "leftist trends". "Leftist" influence generally applied here to holding on to the ideas and policies of former power-holders and propagating them. Journalists must serve the leadership of the time. The journalists like other cadres must \textit{jiefang sixiang} (emancipate their minds) from the bounds of former political authority and study the instructions of the new Central Committee, these being specifically Document No. 7\textsuperscript{35} of the Central Committee, and the documents from its Third Plenum. The journalists must "study properly the \textit{jingshen} (spirit) of the Third Plenum", which represented the thinking and planning of the current leadership.

Maintaining unanimity at this time, according to Wang Yi, included writing articles of censure combating statements and actions which went against the "Four Basic Principles". During the heyday of uncontrolled speech and independent publishing in 1979 and 1980\textsuperscript{36}, some journalists might have sympathized and therefore not censured the speakers and petitioners. Wang Yi said journalists "turning a blind eye" to these words and deeds could not be considered to be properly supporting the Central Committee. The journalist's loyalty must be to the centre, the national government. In localities where the Party committees did not implement the centre's policies, the journalist's duty remained to be faithful to the Central Committee.


\textsuperscript{35} Looked at in chapter five.

\textsuperscript{36} For studies of that speech and independent publishing, see note 44 of Chapter 1.
Those who found that obedience to their local committee conflicted with that requirement had, of course, to act in accordance with the correct Party practices - they might raise their suggestions (or objections) to the local committee but abide by the organizational principle of the Party called democratic centralism. Decisions made at the level of Committee which supervised the newspaper had to be obeyed. Of course, at the same time they might report to the next level above and thus save themselves from being caught out when the Central Committee reprimanded the local authorities.

The second part of Rules clause 1 enshrined the public reporting tasks of the journalist:

"...bring the Party's line and general and specific policies, and work assignments and work methods accurately, speedily and extensively to the masses".

It was the journalist's first duty to serve the Party by communicating its plans and policies to the rest of the population.

Rules clause 2, like most of the remaining clauses, referred to the overall work of the journalists and does not specifically refer to public reporting. It read:

"In a planned, thorough, meticulous and detailed way investigate and research the new state of affairs and new problems of each facet of the building of modernization, listen to opinions from each quarter of the society (for example to public opinion), and fully master first-hand materials".

The journalists might be hampered in their thorough investigation by difficulties in obtaining all sides of any story, especially when Party cadres in charge of an investigated area obstructed investigation. Yet they were expected to be thorough.
Rules clause no. 3 read:

"Rigorously respect the facts, resorting to deception is strictly prohibited. Conscientiously check the materials before publication of a news manuscript contributed. If a report is inconsistent with the facts, promptly make corrections or take other remedial measures".

One slogan from the 1980s categorizes pre-1978 reporting and editing as "false, exaggerated and empty". Political pressures have caused journalists to report for expediency rather than maintain factual truth. Wang Yi stressed thoroughness and being factual in one's work, saying that the journalist must uphold the "seeking of truth from facts" policy, and energetically encourage the practice of investigation and study of issues.

Every working day, professional news personnel had also to anticipate the changes in attitude of the political leaders, and of working superiors, to potential news stories and commentary. A highly conscientious journalist could frequently be torn between accurate reporting and satisfying political expediencies. To do a good professional job, he had to achieve a balance between these two conflicting and sometimes contradictory aims.

Rules clause no. 4:

"Study and master materialist dialectics, distinguish clearly between the innate character and the phenomenon, the principal and secondary aspects,

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37 This phrase denoted following Deng Xiaoping and his policies. The article it is from is Shijian shi jianyan zhenli de weiyi biaozhun published in the Guangming Daily in 1978.
the whole and the parts of matters, and carefully guard against subjectivism, onesidedness and absolutes'.

This clause suggests that journalists were assumed to have a high knowledge of Marxist-Leninist dialectics. It is likely that because of this and the high demands of the other Rules, journalists would seek higher advice in many instances in order to avoid making "errors" of judgment. It also could be said to justify avoiding or covering up a "secondary" but awkward truth for the sake of a 'greater' good.

Rules clause no. 5 reads:

"Solemnly and conscientiously, scrupulously in every detail, try hard through one's work to guide the masses in the struggle to implement the Party's line and the Party's tasks. Pay attention to the social effects of news manuscripts. Acceptance or rejection of material, expression of the content, the heading, choice of words and punctuation must all be highly responsible to the Party and the people."

The journalist must, in public reporting, present reports very carefully in order to persuade people to the Party's point of view, to cooperation with the Party, and obedience of its dictates.

Rules clause no. 6 states:

"One must have the courage to support all correct thinking and action which accord with the interests of the Party and the people; one must have the courage to struggle against all erroneous thoughts and actions which violate the interests of the Party and people".

38 Truth in public reporting is discussed in chapter four.
The job was described herein as serving both the Party and the people, "correct thinking and action", being decided by the Party on behalf of the people. It also shows that a journalist was expected to show bias, not balance or impartiality. Obedience to, and service of the Party, always have been fundamental to the role of PRC journalists. It has been stipulated in the handbooks for news trainees throughout all the phases of politics in the Peoples' Republic of China, and since the Chinese Communist Party was established. Service of the Party in the early 1970s was service of political leaders who regarded journalists as propagandists of political and ideological messages more than as disseminators of news and information. After 1978 journalists had to turn to propagating very different economic and social policies from those of previous years, and were able to include more factual material. "Correct thinking and action", since determined by the current Party leadership, included using news to assist those leaders to publicly denounce people they chose to target as "incorrect".

Clause 7 covers a special role of Chinese journalists not publicized outside China. It reads:

"All of the states of thinking of the cadres and the masses, every social direction, reflections and proposals from every quarter on the Party's line and general and specific policies, having value as reference but not being suitable for public reporting, must be supplied to leadership organs and related departments through the actively responsible writing up of neican (internal reference) materials".

News gathering and circulation activities of Chinese journalists were wider than those of a Western newspaper reporter. He was expected to produce reports for restricted dissemination within the ranks of the leadership of the society. In carrying out this role the journalist behaved as
the "eyes and ears" of the Party, reporting not to the public but to the leadership. He therefore had a status within Chinese society that is not acknowledged as a part of the profession of the journalist in the West. This was the internal reporting role. Clause 7 made it a journalist's duty to report directly to the Party-led government what he observed and heard while gathering and writing for the news office.

Rules clause no. 8 states:

"Abide by the Constitution, the laws, Party discipline, and the work principles of the unit where one works. Do not betray confidential matters. Do not practice unhealthy tendencies."

Wang felt it necessary to comment on the observance of State laws and discipline, because the journalist encountered many Party and State secrets. Wang Yi reminded journalists to: "staunchly enforce Party discipline and State laws, be a model in observing discipline and abiding by the laws", saying "[you] come into contact with a lot of Party and State jimi (secrets) so [you] must be especially careful to keep them secret"39. Wang Yi mentioned the case of a journalist handing over a personally-made tape recording of the whole of the trial proceedings of Wei Jingsheng to a feifa zuzhi (an illegal organization). The organization had then sent it to Hong Kong where its transcript was published.40 Some PRC journalists had access to internal Party affairs and information restricted to government circles. The journalist was not entitled to make individual decisions about the dissemination of information he learned, particularly when there were serious political issues at stake. The journalist in the above case, as far as the

39 Wang Yi, op. cit., 5
40 ibid
government officials were concerned, enjoyed the privilege of being present in a closed court. He was expected not to make this privileged information public, much less distribute it to people who disagreed with the government's handling of the case.

Rules clause no. 9 reads:

"Be modest and prudent, learn from the masses, learn from all people who have knowledge, learn from the materials reported up from below. Do not posture importantly, giving yourself airs like an imperial envoy, (but) be willing to be a primary school pupil of the people"

It addressed the properly humble attitude of the journalist, whose job it was to listen and learn at all times and assume nothing, and regarding all people from different ranks and walks of life as possible sources of useful information.

Rules clause no. 10:

"Conscientiously study Marxism-Leninism, and Mao Zedong Thought, study the line and general and specific policies of the Party, painstakingly practise the basic skills of collecting news by investigation and interviewing and of writing, learn the use of the various forms of news report, strive to make news reports correct, fresh, moving, and unique in style".

The journalist was required to maintain strong theoretical and political knowledge and hone professional skills. This clause is almost a summary of the other stipulations. In 1981, Wang stressed the need for a reformation of "the [journalist's] style of work" saying that the people would not be served in the tradition of wholehearted service built by the Party unless journalists improved their attitudes and work. He remarked that the "standard of basic
professional skills amongst journalists at this time is too low". He said that there cannot be any "independent pitching into the work and producing of quality results"\textsuperscript{41} unless the professional skills were improved through hard work on the part of journalists.

The journalist's political orientation had to be that of a professional devoted to the country, the Party, socialism and service of the people. One had to insist upon the truth as defined by the Party's ideology, support the Party in its efforts to govern the people and oppose whatever would hinder those efforts. The journalist had to abide by the constitution, laws, Party discipline and the rules of the news office. With access to secret and confidential matters one should maintain political unanimity with the Party's Central Committee, and reveal nothing sensitive without permission. In the public reporting role the primary duty was to report persuasively the Party leadership's plans, encouraging the public to carry out the Party's intentions and orders for their execution.

The most important revelation in these Rules was that the journalist working in an official news office was required to supply intelligence gathered during the course of reporting tasks and investigative assignments directly to the Party leadership. Those requirements, listed in Rules which were distributed only to insiders, meant that the journalist working in an officially endorsed news office was more than a newspaper reporter and indicated a role was much more than that of a mere propagandist. It also raised the question of the fine line to be drawn between news and 'secret intelligence' discussed in Chapter One. It also led to picturing the news offices as centres of collection of news, of sifters of news and redirectors of

\textsuperscript{41} bu neng duli shangzhan
news into both public media and internal government channels. The latter roles will be discussed in the next chapter.

COLLUSION WITH THE STATE

One might conclude from examining the training and expectations made of journalists that they were required to assist in the political administration of the nation. The official access to the leadership and to Party and state secrets was much greater than that of most journalists in the West, and so proportionately was a journalist's theoretical potential for political influence. In China, as in the USSR and Eastern Bloc media systems, the journalistic profession was to a great extent a political function and a party assignment. The people engaged in the gathering of news and its editing in the PRC practised what could be termed state journalism.

The role of the journalist was dual: both government propagandist and government intelligence cadre. For both roles the work was basically similar: gathering, organising and reporting information and opinions. The political or social status was thus quite different from that of the journalist in the Western liberal tradition, as discussed by Siebert. It was also different from that of the journalist within Western "social responsibility" theory.

42 Those attracted to and influenced by aspects of 'Western' societies might wish for less Party cadre control over news organizations but while the political system is undergoing reform rather than revolution it is unlikely general acceptance of the ethos will change rapidly. For want of better terms the range of elements operating within the PRC society, economy and polity which might be identified as Chinese or Communist are extremely likely to remain pervasive and powerful.

43 Buzek, 244.

postulated by Theodore Petersen. Chinese journalists made investigations and gathered news. Western journalists Petersen described as 'servicing the political system by providing information, discussion and debate on public affairs'. Chinese journalists served their particular political system by writing for distribution to two distinct and separated audiences - internally to the leadership and publicly to the masses. They thus served a Chinese socialist political system run by a Communist Party.

Chinese journalists protected the interests of the people but not, as in Petersen's theory to describe Western "social responsibility", "by serving as a watch-dog against the government". The PRC system of government was based on the premise that individual citizens, their opinions and attitudes and stores of knowledge, were of lesser importance than their combined abilities organized into a whole by the State. The Chinese journalist thus enquired into instances of maladministration of central government policies, and into injustices to ordinary citizens who had been hurt by misconduct of some supposedly atypical officials. A journalist's methods and presentation of cases should not depict renmin didui zhengfu (the people and the state as adversaries).

As Chinese society has developed and recently been liberalized, greater public criticism and exposure of the machinery of government and of certain people have been permitted but always in a way which implied that the top leadership and Party members as a whole were concerned with the peoples' interests. No antagonism was allowed toward the government through journalistic championing of peoples' interests. The roles of ombudsman and government intelligence gatherer went hand in hand and it was difficult to see

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45 ibid.
where, during news collection, the line was drawn between the two.

**THE JOURNALISM TEXTS**

From 1978 onwards, factual reporting was more emphasized. Nevertheless, permeating all of the practices, training manuals and codes for producers and presenters of news, was the requirement to make points persuasively in accordance with the Party line. Chinese authors of texts on journalism in the late 1970s and on into the 1980s dealt with an ideology, or complex set of attitudes and practices for journalists in China to maintain⁴⁶. Their writings attempted to explain and provide justification for the post-1978 practices of Chinese journalists, as well as to describe what news they must gather, how it should be gathered, and how their reports should be presented. The writings were often manuals used to educate journalists, published after long use in classes as internal teaching materials.

**PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

In 1975, James C.Y. Chu wrote that journalists in the Peoples' Republic of China were best understood as cadres working for the Party.⁴⁷ That approach tallied with the way in which the Chinese described their news workers' role. Chinese journalists were officially referred to as *xinwen ganbu* (news cadres)⁴⁸.

Political changes have, however, encouraged workers within the news offices to become more distinctly identifiable as professionals. Most

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⁴⁶ Dai Bang, Lu Yunfan, Ai Feng, Gan Xifen, to name a few.


journalists and editors in the 1980s were engaged in both gathering and disseminating a wide range of news and information daily, as other Party reporting cadres probably did, into the leadership organs but also they were public propagators of news and ideas. The characteristics and role of a PRC journalist are clearly becoming distinctly different from that of other cadres in the PRC.

During the period from 1978 to 1982, professional societies were introduced or re-established to define the work of gatherers and presenters of news professionally. The most important of these were at the national level, the Beijing Journalism (Learned) Society (BJS) and the All China Journalists' Federation (ACJF). The BJS was founded on the 6th February 1980 for inquiry into important questions of news theory and practice and to research and develop Marxist journalism. It was primarily an academic organization for research purposes. Unlike the ACJF it was not a journalists' association, although some of their activities might overlap. They appeared to cooperate in some ventures such as the annual "Best News Selection" and production of the publication connected with it. The ACJF resumed its activities as a union of news workers in August 1980.

The professional practice of Chinese journalists was determined by their training and the expectations of the offices where they worked, these being Party approved institutions. Ethics of behaviour and Rules laid down by political authorities shaped the daily attitudes and procedures followed in interviewing and reporting. Works by senior Chinese journalists and by journalism educators focused reporters and editors' attention on the

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49 XWNJ 82 entry, 423-425

50 XWNJ 82 entry, 415-417. Nte the gap - 10 years out of action for the ACJF but not re-established until1980
complexity of their professional tasks and the distinct nature of news offices which provided news as well as shaping public opinion with propaganda. Identification as professionals distinct from other Chinese cadres in the early 1980s concentrated journalists' efforts on informative reporting of news, though political involvement by Party propaganda cadres was never far distant.
CHAPTER FOUR - INTERNAL REPORTS AND PUBLIC PROPAGANDA

News gathered into the offices by journalists was sifted and edited for two audiences - the general public and the leadership. News reported in the newspapers was much more limited in content than that provided in internal bulletins prepared for circulation amongst the leadership. The preparation of public reports was designed to create a particular view of the leadership and society in the minds of readers, and thus often revealed only a limited version of a journalist's initial report. In this chapter the internal reporting system will be examined. It will also look at the selective reporting of news evident in public reports, the dominant attitude to public opinion and presentation of the Party's line through news release into the newspapers.

THE INTERNAL REPORTING SYSTEM

The news office served as a conduit for news and opinion dissemination from the masses up to the leadership, through the system of neibu qingkuang fanying (internal reporting on situations). This reporting was destined for distribution to higher levels of authority in the Party-government structure and not for the public. During the course of his investigations, the journalist recorded his observations and wrote up his reports for the newspaper office. Some of the material was selected by editors for limited dissemination or "reflection" up to various organs of Party and State power. This material was usually collated and edited into the special information bulletins called qingkuang jianbao (bulletins on the situation) or neibu cankao (internal reference)\(^1\) which all of the newspaper

\(^1\) neican is the frequently used abbreviation of neibu cankao.
In scholarly works about the news media and propaganda systems of states run by Communist Parties, there has been little emphasis on the role of the journalist in gathering intelligence for the internal use of the government, although some of the bulletins they produce have been described and discussed. While rarely publicized, the existence of this role is of central importance to the position of journalists and editors within contemporary Chinese society and government, and to the working processes of the major newspaper and broadcasting establishments. It has been spelt out by the Party in the draft Rules for Journalists. Journalists must report through the newspaper or broadcasting office directly to the Party-led government what has been observed and heard during the course of their work, behaving as the "eyes and ears of the Party". The reporters, stringers and editors in the news offices thus quietly contributed to Party and government policy revision by passing on intelligence to the government. The PRC journalist has always had a major responsibility to report and write up that material "not suitable for open publication or temporarily not suitable", destined for restricted circulation within the ranks of the political leadership and government departments.

2 The serious newspapers are the Party organs at each governmental level, as distinct from the more popular evening newspapers.


4 There is no valid reason to suppose that this political function of the news offices in the PRC will ever be eliminated.
PARTY LEADERS' EXPECTATIONS

A 1978 handbook distributed internally and designed primarily for journalists of the *Peoples' Daily* office explained that reporters could help the Party's leadership in two ways: in defence of citizens' interests, and in assisting leaders to find out about the abuses and shortcomings of their subordinates. These instructions stated that a reporter must let the Party's responsible cadres use him as their stringer (information gatherer).\(^5\) He must also be the ears and eyes of the leadership *jiguan* (organs) and their assistants, reporting on situations, problems, and *yijian* (opinions) gathered from the masses during interviews and investigations.\(^6\) The reporter must "help the next highest level (of Party organization) to understand the situation... in this way participating in the leadership (of the nation)" That next highest level uses the reporter's "*fanying* (reportings) from contact with the masses in the revision and the supplementation of their general policies.\(^7\)

The form of assistance required by the leadership was described thus: "When those at the next higher level bestow upon the journalist a duty, [they] should speak thus: we are currently implementing such and such a thing, [so] you look at how each district is carrying it out, what problems there are [and] whether the problem is in implementation or in the specific policy itself. If the results of the journalist's observation and study point to a

\(^5\) *Tantan Baozhi Gongzuo*, News Research Institute and *RMRB*, 1978, internal circulation only, 75.

\(^6\) ibid., 72.

\(^7\) ibid., 73. That level referred to here must be the Central Committee since no other level of committee has the right to make *fangzhen*. 
problem of implementation, [those at] the next highest level can tell [those of] the lower levels to do it properly otherwise the masses will suffer loss; if it is a problem in the policy itself then the higher level can explain to the lower levels that the policy does not adequately fit the "situation" and [thus allow them to administer it] flexibly.\(^8\)

Hu Jiwei, in 1980, stated clearly the Party's requirements of journalists' investigative findings in the national professional journal for editors and journalists, *News Front*\(^9\). Invoking the political authority of Liu Shaoqi\(^10\), he wrote that all working personnel on a newspaper were investigators and that all investigations must have a *mudi* (purpose), the reason for investigation and research being 'in order to solve problems'.\(^11\)

The purpose of any journalistic investigation was toward promotion of effective Party policy-making and implementation.

Lan Hongwen, in his work on journalism in 1984, noted that the Central Committee of the Party expected to be able to comprehend the 'whole' situation from reading internal reference reports, because the journalists would have reported details of failures as well as of successes\(^12\). The leadership required complete information in order to make correct judgements or evaluations. It expected to be informed of 'interesting new work methods' which might only be in the pilot stages, and thus harness

\(^8\) ibid., 74.

\(^9\) When he wrote this he was the editor-in-chief of the *Peoples' Daily*.

\(^10\) President of China, prior to the onset of the Cultural revolution in 1966.


\(^12\) Lan referred actually to 'the negative and the positive sides'.
able people and take useful and interesting projects under its authority. Journalists' observations of situations where a problem 'had not actually developed yet but indications were that one might' could enable Party leaders to anticipate trouble or potential failures before it was too late to turn them around. Criticisms of the government and of policies thus were expected along with reports of disagreements and differing opinions. The Party in this way used the journalists as its watchers in a general way to assist it in running the nation.

News offices were required to contribute intelligence, gleaned during the course of their usual interviewing and investigation activities, to the government, because the system of reporting within the governmental structure was imperfect. The Party leaders needed help to detect and correct the shortcomings of their subordinates. In a bureaucratic system incompetence, ruthlessness, disloyalty and corruption hindered the effective and proper implementation of policies and execution of tasks. Some officials did not demonstrate initiative where it was required because they feared punishment for doing so. Reporting to higher levels of the Party-led government that policies seemed inadequate when put into practice might be anathema to an official. Someone in charge of a large project would feel that to point to problems might be seen as an admission of incompetence and would therefore fear retaliation and even removal from one's post. Officials often did not pass on important matters out of fears inherent in their own position within the bureaucratic hierarchy. The journalists, however, could collate information gathered from various people involved in a project and present a report to more powerful leaders. They thus over-rode the usual

bureaucratic channels of communication, avoiding the hitches and stumbling blocks.

Lan Hongwen asked why with so many other channels the Party had for understanding *qingkuang* (situations), it required journalists to *fanying* (report) the situations. His answer was circumspect: that journalists' work allowed them to see and record more of the many interesting issues and events that 'people generally' do not, to come to grips with situations where others would have difficulties doing so, and to make comparisons and draw conclusions that have eluded others. The Party needed input from the journalists whose advantageous working routine included "travelling widely, having a wide range of contacts, convenience of visiting and interviewing high-level leaders and authoritative scholars as well as ... talking with the masses at the basic levels unrestrainedly".

CONTRIBUTION TO POLICY MAKING

According to Hu Jiwei, the reports submitted internally could affect the policy-making processes in any of three ways. Journalistic intelligence might indicate to Party Central Committee policy-makers that a policy implemented in the past was "incorrect". 'The goal of investigation is primarily to see whether these policies are correct or not, they might be but then again they might not be' Theoretically then, the way had been left open for sufficiently experienced and politically confident journalists to provide the

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14 This term might well mean Party cadres and government officials.

15 quoted the words of Xinhua journalist Yu Quanyu from his article on investigative reporting in Mu Qing, Ye Shengtao, et al, *Xinwen Caixie Jingyan Tan*, Xinhua Chubanshe, Beijing, 1983, 557. Incidentally his name means 'understand the sphere of power'.

16 Hu Jiwei, op. cit., 3
evidence to challenge the Party's zhengce (specific policies). This had to be handled confidentially within the Party-government structure and with the backing of someone with high Party political authority. Secondly, investigative reporting might show up inadequacies and flaws of a policy, and thus give the policy-makers information - the 'unearthing of new situations' based upon which they could reform the policy. The third way that a journalist's report of his investigative work might influence policy was by targeting questions which had not been previously considered. 'The aim of investigation is to discover problems, (and) according to these new questions suggest what new policies should be drawn up'.

The manuscripts were supposed to provide the 'experiences' and 'typical cases' or 'prototypes' for directing work, as well as all kinds of dongtai (developments) or 'current events' for discerning problems' in the governing of China. Such reports 'provided a reliable basis on which the Party's leading bodies formulated general and specific policies'. From the journalistic intelligence presented in these bulletins, new 'cases' or qingkuang (conditions), new dongxiang (trends), new jingyan (experiences) and new 'problems' perceived by the journalists contributed to the basis on which policies were made, altered or even discarded.

Since the leadership class in the People's Republic of China is assumed to have the superior knowledge, abilities and judgment which legitimate its authority to make decisions and expect their obedient implementation, news offices' internal reports do not have to be tailored to

17 all quotes, ibid.

an eighty percent positive and only twenty percent negative presentation.\footnote{See speech of 8/2/85 to the Central Committee Secretariat Meeting by Hu Yaobang published as "Guanyu Dang de Xinwen Gongzuo" or "On The Party's News Work" in the \textit{Guangming Daily}, 15/4/85, 1-2. Hu explained that the leaders' attitude is that the dominant aspects of socialist society are promising and the darker or negative sides are less important. Thus in 1984 news work cadres were advised that newspaper content should be divided roughly into eight parts telling of achievements and other promising and praiseworthy aspects, and two parts only should criticize, tell of shortcomings and of the darker sides. The newspapers must inspire the people to move forward and create new lives. The dark sides are only to be discussed in order to teach the people to eliminate them.} The masses were permitted to see only that much of the news and opinion which has been sifted and presented to cause them least alarm and least damage to Party prestige and government authority. There was a lot more freedom for criticism and presentation of unpleasant facts and opinions through the internal reporting system. By not seeing \textit{neican} (internal reports) the public could not be badly affected in the ways they supposedly would be if the news appeared in public media reports. The investigative journalist thus had a much more interesting and broader scope to unearth stories than a reader of the open press would conclude.

Full details of the process of contributing intelligence for policy-making are not available, as the inner workings of the Party are shrouded from outsiders' view with secrecy. Therefore it should be assumed that some reports of journalists' investigations were selected by politically sensitive editors up the scale of authority for sending to the higher levels. Lan Hongwen in his handbook for Chinese journalists, cited two examples of journalists' internal reference drawing the attention of CCP Central Committee leaders and thus influencing their decision-making.

In the first, Premier Zhou Enlai became interested in one Xinhua News Agency comrade's reports in 1971 and, in the second, the CCP Secretariat's turning of a \textit{Beijing Daily} journalist's four internal reference reports into a
Central Committee Secretariat Document during the early 1980s. The few details Lan revealed by Lan shed some light on the process of influencing policy-making. The Xinhua journalist in Hebei wrote an internal report about problems associated with the Baiyang Lake. After the material had been sent up internally to the Party's Central Committee it was read by Zhou Enlai, who passed it on to Li Xiannian with instructions that a meeting be called of the Hebei and Tianjin cadres responsible for matters concerning hydraulic power. Li wrote his instructions in accordance with Zhou Enlai's wishes and directed that the people concerned be advised to attend. The Ministry of Water and Electricity convened the meeting, in accordance with Zhou's directive, to discuss the problem of putting in order the Hai River construction projects. Later, Zhou Enlai personally received the journalist and his editors together with the cadres at the huibao hui (report-back meeting)\(^20\).

In the case of the Beijing Daily journalist's report on the housing problem in Beijing, the responsible persons within the Central Committee prepared a Secretariat document and called a meeting of the Secretariat to discuss the problem. From that meeting the concerned officials from the Beijing City Committee were advised to participate at a meeting where the journalist was to present the qingkuang (situation). The Secretariat Meeting subsequently made a decision on the short-term solution of the problem. The Beijing City Committee then called a city-committee work meeting where they chuanda (relayed down) the Secretariat's zhishi (instruction) and decided to hold a city-wide discussion meeting. The City's

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departments set about solving the housing problems of the two residential districts concerned.21

Ai Feng cited another case where the internal reference reports written by a Peoples' Daily journalist and some Xinhua News Agency writers on serious problems in Beijing's urban construction were used for reference by the CC Secretariat when it formulated its four-point directive on the matter. However he does not provide any details.22

The role of the journalist, as an intelligence cadre, in influencing policy-making remains limited to reporting news and observations. Journalists are not officially invested with the power to make policy or administrative decisions. Liu Binyan23 has an editor in his story tell the young female journalist that "You mustn't forget that you are a newspaper reporter. Don't do things that might give people the mistaken impression that our newspaper is an institution of state power"24. If provincial committee secretaries or other leaders sought out a recognized journalist to hear yijian (suggestions), their decisions might be influenced. The uniqueness of the journalist's working role allowed such a knowledge of events and affairs that Party committee leaders might even request tichu jianyi (proposals be

21 Lan, op. cit.44-49.
23 Liu Binyan worked as a journalist in the 1950s but was removed from his duties for twenty years. He joined the Peoples Daily newspaper office staff in the late 1970s as a journalist, and became for his expose reportage.
The system of making internal reports on situations meant that journalists had a much more interesting and unrestricted scope for investigative journalism than readers of the open public press might surmise from the public reports carried by the newspapers. While investigative work eventually might provide copy for publication, a journalist might also unearth a problem sufficiently serious to attract the attention of political leaders as high as those in the Central Committee’s Politburo. That amounted to success in the role of intelligence and ensured a contribution to Chinese policy and decision making. The journalist’s reporting directly into the Party’s leadership organs acted as an important checking on the governmental system and could assist some leaders to overcome communication blocks.

Some journalists apparently regarded the writing of internal reports as a less worthy occupation than being published in the newspaper, a point made by Liu Binyan back in 1956, in his *Benbao de neihu xiaoxi* (The Inside News of Our Newspaper). In that piece of *baogao wenxue* (reportage) he describes the experiences of the heroine, an enthusiastic and idealistic young journalist, who was dissatisfied that ‘For a long time now, her reports had been classified as "inside information". They were distributed to the offices concerned, or used as reference materials for guest authors writing articles’. Journalists could, however, both write successful

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25 Wang Yi, in *Xinwen Ziliao*, 1st August, 1981, 5. Note that the word *jianyi* is stronger and has more serious implications than *yijian*.

26 The French word for this type of literary writing based on and including real events and people. A semi-fictional, semi-nonfictional form.

27 Liu published this story in two parts in *Renmin Wenxue*, in June 1956 and 1957. Quote here is taken from Nieh Hualing’s translation which appears as Liu Pin-yen, "The Inside
internal reports and have reports published in the newspaper. For example, Wang Aisheng, a Peoples' Daily journalist based in Shanxi Province since 1981, had earned the pizhuan (approval) of his neican (internal reference report) by Party Central Committee and leading comrades in the National State Council. The Central Committee's Discipline Inspection Commission and the Shanxi Province Party Committee had sent work parties to re-examine and solve problems exposed in his reports. By late 1984 more than forty of his piping baodao (critical reports) had been published in the Peoples' Daily.28

Lan Hongwen, perhaps writing to encourage Chinese journalists, emphasized that writing "internal reference" manuscripts was not inferior to writing public news reports. He pointed out that the Xinhua News Agency comrade in Hebei who wrote an internal reference report on the inappropriateness of the cuoshi (measures)29, to tame the Hai River and deal with the Baiyang Lake and damage to the aquatic resources, was praised personally by Zhou Enlai. Therefore, politically ambitious journalists apparently should aim to write about important problems for the leadership. Lan further sought to encourage all journalists not to neglect this internal reporting duty by asserting that "internal reference" reports could become important items published in the mass media at a later date. Thus a journalist potentially could become both important in the eyes of the leaders and in the

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News of the Newspaper", 411-464 of Nieh Hua-ling, ibid. This quote is on 412.

28 from the article "Brave enough to write critical reports (he) is admired by colleagues - outstanding news worker Wang Aisheng" in Guangming Ribao 1/12/84, 6.

29 In the hierarchy of policies cuoshi come below zhengce which in turn are less important than fangzhen
eyes of the public. It was still apparent that journalists in news offices were sometimes dissatisfied with restrictions on the publication of their work for a wider audience. This issue will be addressed in the following chapter.

NEWS FROM THE PUBLIC TO THE LEADERS

Through the internal reporting channel, the PRC news offices were in one sense acting on behalf of the citizens, championing their rights in the face of maladministration but always with the backing of some part of the Party leadership. Direct following up of citizens' complaints however, the role more identifiable as ombudsman, was achieved through the work done on duzhe laixin laifang (readers' letters and visits) in the qunzhong gongzuoj (mass work) department of the news office. This news communication channel involving the expression of opinions through letters to the editor as the political right of an ordinary member of the masses was introduced in the previous chapter.

Whether the letters were circulated depended upon the nature of the issues raised. News content taken from various letters might be collated into a report for an internal publication. Some letters were printed in internal publications for restricted circulation through "letters' compilations". Internal compilations of readers' letters provided through the editorial sifting of the mass work departments could show areas of trouble, discontent, and poor implementation of Party policies. This news was disseminated to the leadership but not directly back to the masses of citizens. The recipients of

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this news were specifically "the leading comrades concerned of cities and provinces and the relevant departmental committees of the Central Committee of the Party and of the State Council"\(^3\). It appears that responsibility for distributing these internal publications resided in a news office's editorial department, while they were produced in conjunction with the Mass Work Department. Internal publications containing readers comments specifically on newspaper content were produced by some news offices as well, such as: "From The Readers" and "Readers' Criticism Of The Paper"\(^3\).  

**PUBLICATION OF NEWS**

Publication of news by the news offices was designed to assist the Party in its governing of the Chinese nation. The Party saw newspapers and broadcasts as channels through which to disseminate its orders, and to provide instruction on the general methods of implementing its policies. As the *Rules for Journalists* dictated to staff of news offices, they must "bring the Party line and general and specific policies, and work assignments and work methods accurately, speedily and extensively to the masses"\(^3\). Publication of news should inform all members of the public of the government's policies and directions. As well as providing news to the public, journalists were directed to "try hard through their work to guide the masses in the struggle to implement the Party's line and the Party's tasks"\(^3\).  

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\(^3\) *China Peasants' Paper* entry in *XWNJ* 82, 203.  

\(^3\) Examples included "From the Readers" - *Henan Daily* in *XWNJ* 82, 262 and "Readers' Criticism of The Paper" - *Changjiang Daily* entry, *XWNJ* 82, 264 and *Nanfang Daily* entry, *XWNJ* 82, 268.  

\(^3\) see *Rules*  

\(^3\) ibid.
'Guidance' of the masses in their 'struggle' involved much more than the straight factual reporting which was made internally to the leadership.

PUBLIC OPINION

The newspaper produced by the office was designed to circulate news which would not damage the authority of the Party. This was achieved by omission of large amounts of the news gathered into the office by the staff, and the careful presentation of the small amount published. In this sense of selectively transmitting news, the newspapers were designed to influence the "opinion" of the public. The organized news circulation through such a mass medium was designed to mould the collective attitudes of the intended audience. Chinese writers on the theory and practice of journalism therefore emphasized the use of news in forming and affecting public opinion.

Gan Xifen mentioned that news 'plays a part in reflecting, influencing and organizing public opinion'. He regarded news as a special means for influencing public opinion, saying this was achieved through the reporting of or commentary on the newest information. The CASS researchers also noted that the reporting of news was a 'special means of reflecting policies, expressing thought and reflecting and leading public opinion'.

What writers mean by public opinion varies so it is hard to define. The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary defines public opinion as 'what is

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35 Gan Xifen, "What is News?", XWXLJ, Volume 1, 15.
36 Gan Xifen, Xinwen Lilun Jichu , 1982, 50.
generally thought about something\textsuperscript{38}. The interpretation of "generally thought" appears to depend upon what 'public' the writer is talking about. Gan Xifen said that public opinion is the 'comment of the masses' uttered on controversial issues, or expressed a little differently, 'the support for or opposition to something' the people have.\textsuperscript{39}

Lin Yutang, writing in the mid-1930s, was very concerned at the state of Chinese newspapers then, which he felt were full of 'official misinformation and propaganda'.\textsuperscript{40} In his \textit{Press and Public Opinion in China}, he looked at the mass medium of the time - the printed press - as a 'history of the struggle between public opinion and authority in China'. He theorized that 'There is always a latent hostility between the ruler and the ruled ... always a tug-of-war between the ruler and the people: if the government wins, the people must lose' and vice-versa.\textsuperscript{41} He described and discussed public opinion in China from ancient times until his day. By public opinion, he apparently meant the opinions often expressed by educated Chinese who were not directly in the service of the Emperor or government.

In China since 1949, and during the period of reforms which began in 1978, the official Chinese stance has been that public opinion was expressed on behalf of the people by government-oriented professionals. The specialist news gatherers collected opinions from the public for transmission into the leadership. They also aimed to create a general 'public opinion' to be disseminated through the press and accepted by all.

\textsuperscript{38} \textit{Shorter Oxford English Dictionary}

\textsuperscript{39} Gan Xifen, \textit{Xinwen Lilun Jichu}, 52.

\textsuperscript{40} Lin Yutang, \textit{A History of the Press and Public Opinion in China}, Kelly and Walsh, Shanghai, 1936.

\textsuperscript{41} ibid.
To guide the public, journalists were expected to avoid creating certain assumed obstacles to the implementation of Party policies. Several reasons why the public news media could not contain certain news and differences of opinion were given by PRC authorities on journalism. A Peoples' University expert on journalism theory reminded journalists that the public news media had a 'shortcoming' because they offered opportunities to interested 'hostile powers' for "prying out secrets". He also noted that criticism, probably meaning too much criticism overall or the wrong types or targets of criticism, could "easily arouse a mood of discontent" amongst some members of the public.

The CASS academics mentioned that published discussion of the rights and wrongs of policies could cause "ideological confusion" in peoples' minds. The expression of widely differing views as encouraged by the Party's double hundred policy could not reach beyond the bounds of the Four Basic Principles (socialism, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought), defy the Party's leadership or replace criticism and self-criticism. "Useful discussions" of zhengce (policies) might appear in the newspapers but not debates about whether these were right or wrong lest "ideological confusion" ensue. They also maintained that published

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42 Gan Xifen, Xinwen Lilun Jichu, 81.
43 ibid., 153.
44 Dai Bang et. al., op. cit., 187-88.
45 Later rephrased as "people's democratic dictatorship"
references to unresolved policy issues unaccompanied by adequate answers might cause cadres and others to "be at a loss as to what to do and thus each have to go his own way"\textsuperscript{47}. These and important issues of a political or theoretical nature, and even the State constitution, might be publicly "discussed" after the Party had \textit{pizhun} (approved it), but any such coverage must "reach a conclusion" within a certain amount of time. Published news and opinion was not allowed to "cause alarm" to the readers\textsuperscript{48}.

The choice of material for public news reports thus had to be carefully restricted. A manuscript would only be published if it appeared likely to encourage support of the Party-led government and obedience to its orders. Published news and opinion had to be sifted and presented in such a way that it would "cause least alarm" to members of the public and least damage to Party prestige and government authority.

\textbf{CREATING A POSITIVE PICTURE}

Generally journalists were to report news to the public with a certain \textit{fangzhen} (guiding principle) that "praise is the mainstay"\textsuperscript{49}. "Problems and difficulties" must be reported within the context that the "overall situation is good"\textsuperscript{50}. No report which could contribute to dissatisfaction or a challenge to the authority of the government could be published. If the journalists had seen proof of \textit{pianpo} (partiality) and faults\textsuperscript{51} in some policy it was

\textsuperscript{47} ibid., 187-88.
\textsuperscript{48} ibid.
\textsuperscript{49} Lan Hongwen, op. cit., 131.
\textsuperscript{50} Dai Bang, et al, op. cit., 246.
\textsuperscript{51} shiwu
understood that "some [of this] naturally would not be publicly reported\textsuperscript{52}. Hu Yaobang explained through the \textit{Guangming Daily} in April 1985 the leaders' attitude that the dominant aspects of socialist society (in other words the Peoples' Republic of China) were promising ones and the "darker" or negative sides less important. Thus journalists, as "news work cadres", were advised that eighty percent of newspaper content should be devoted to achievements and other promising and praiseworthy aspects, and only twenty percent should criticize, tell of shortcomings and of the darker sides. The newspapers must inspire the people to move forward and create new lives. The "dark sides" were only supposed to be discussed in order to teach the people to eliminate them\textsuperscript{53}. The need to show that the development of the society and the economy was good thus prevailed over any 'full' or 'balanced' presentation of facts.

The accepted and required bias in both selection of material and its presentation was a much greater reflection of the positive aspects of society and less of the negative. The desired norms of society should be reported and not the incidental or undesired unusual. These were expressed as the main currents\textsuperscript{54} and the secondary\textsuperscript{55}. All reporters and those who sub-edited for the newspapers must attend to the 'social effects' of the news manuscripts. In other words, the discipline imposed on journalists, as outlined in the \textit{Rules for Journalists} must be observed, and news submitted

\textsuperscript{52} Dai Bang, et al, op. cit., 246.
\textsuperscript{53} \textit{Guangming Daily}, 15/4/85, 1-2.
\textsuperscript{54} \textit{zhuliu}
\textsuperscript{55} \textit{gebiede}. ref-ibid., 52.
for publication should be checked with authorities so that they could decide whether its publication might have harmful effects or not.

SELECTIVE REPORTING OF FACT

The facts contained in the public news reports had to be the "facts" demonstrating the "study, unqualified support\textsuperscript{56}, support\textsuperscript{57} and implementation of Party policies by the popular masses"\textsuperscript{58}. One Chinese academic authority described public news reporting as the "uninterrupted propagation of a kind of sixiang guandian (ideological viewpoint)\textsuperscript{59}. He stated that the "thinking" (in other words overall attitudes and beliefs)\textsuperscript{60} of the journalists was daily chuanda (transmitted downwards)\textsuperscript{61} to the masses without their being conscious of the fact\textsuperscript{62}. Both opinions which were expressed in opposition to this Party-cultivated thinking, and those actions which contravened Party instructions had to be opposed in the public media, whether obliquely or openly, to show that these practices would not be tolerated. The author of a guide to journalistic caifang (news gathering) declared that "words which contradict\textsuperscript{63} the Party's line and general and specific policies, actions which violate the (State) Law and (Party)

\textsuperscript{56} yonghu: this word is used for approval of, and total support given to, a leader, political party, policy and so on.

\textsuperscript{57} zhichi: this milder word for support is probably included after the stronger in order to add emphasis

\textsuperscript{58} Dai Bang, et al, op. cit., 246.

\textsuperscript{59} Gan Xifen, Xinwen Lilun Jichu, 80-81.

\textsuperscript{60} sixiang

\textsuperscript{61} this term is used for news dissemination from the leadership to the masses.

\textsuperscript{62} Gan Xifen, Xinwen Lilun Jichu, 80-81.

\textsuperscript{63} weifan
Discipline and incorrect styles of work must be criticized.  

Wang Yi stressed thoroughness and being factual, when commenting on the Rules, saying that the journalist must uphold the "seeking of truth from facts" policy. While describing the task of adhering to the truth as a 'brave struggle'. Reporting of the facts, however, meant selection of those facts which supported the ideological 'truths' and not an unembellished reporting of fact. Journalists were expected to create or represent the 'truth' in the minds of readers through factual selection. In other words, factual manipulation was acceptable. The facts selected for the newspaper reports were designed to promote the overall achievement of economic, social and political goals determined from above.

Most Chinese theoreticians argued that Western journalism's concepts of impartiality and objectivity were unfounded and untenable. Persuasion, not factual objectivity, was the major criterion for determining which various features of style would be used. In all of the practices, training manuals and codes for journalists the requirement to make points persuasively in accordance with the Party line was emphasized. This bias toward persuasion has its roots far back in Chinese history. Chinese historians were overly concerned with 'didactic function and "praise and blame"' and their writings often could not avoid being moralistic and subjective. Much writing for publication was aimed at making persuading the readers rather than simply

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64 weifa luanji
65 Lan Hongwen, op. cit., 131.
67 A colleague studying a Chinese historian raised this matter.
informing them.

As Lu Yunfan stated, news should not be reported youwen bilu (as is) 68. Choices should be made, unwanted material pruned and the issues refined and generalized. A class viewpoint or "Party character" underlay those decisions and the unembellished narration of facts, described as "enumeration of phenomena" and "lacking ideological viewpoint" were not taught. News reporting should always include analysis and have a goal 69.

There have been numerous cases of distortion of fact to suit political requirements. Some journalists distorted facts in order to jingen xingshi (keep abreast of the situation). For example, tasks completed prior to the Third Plenum were written up as achievements flowing on from the communique of the Third Plenum. To illustrate the positive results flowing on from the study of scientific and cultural knowledge a blueprint drawn up by a higher level was presented as the design of a work unit after studies. Products or technologies under research or experimentation were were reported as already successful and in production 70, because positive technological achievements were required for the newspaper propaganda.

Prior to 1978 untrue but desirable qualities were attributed to heroic characters, and the achievements produced by several units attributed to one model person. These characters were presented to the citizens for emulation, but some journalists felt that readers could see through the facades and demanded more factual and realistic descriptions. When they criticized this

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69 Lu Yunfan, ibid, 51.
type of distortion the comment was that this practice had "damaged the hero phenomenon for propaganda usage".

The authorities wanted to end blatant false reporting of these types (certain unacceptable distortions and fictionalizing) after 1978, because they believed that when the readers detected falsification they lost confidence in the newspapers. The newspapers were considered a useful tool in governing and leaders did not wish to let the potential power of the mass media dissipate by people ignoring them. They wished journalists to jingen xingshi (keep abreast of the situation) but to do so in a believable fashion. Real examples were to be employed rather than fictitious. Of course blatant factual distortion was considered to be harmful, and journalists were advised against distortion of the facts and fictionalizing after 1978. In other words, journalists were expected to select, angle and edit factual material but not to make up facts.

Another aspect of factual distortion was attacked by Gan Xifen. He claimed that the leadership in the 1970s, categorized as the Lin Biao and Jiang Qing clique, distorted production figures: record yearly harvests were claimed when in fact the national economy "was on the brink of collapse", overfulfilled production targets were reported when in fact the original targets had been "reduced" for publication purposes. It is unlikely that such distortion could be eradicated. It is easy to imagine officials wanting the truth stretched or distorted in order to present a good image of society and the economy under its rule. Journalists were expected to maintain that the overall situation was good whether or not this were so. It was therefore unlikely that

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71 ibid., 19.

72 Gan Xifen, Xinwen Lilun Jichu, 117.
distortion could ever be erased from newspapers. Indeed distortion was a part of their mission.

SEARCHING FOR PUBLISHABLE NEWS

Apart from the news stories a reporter was directed to write up for publication, potentially publishable news items could be found using "news sense". Through their training journalists and and editors had received and their working experience, they developed an ability to judge the educational and instructional potential of a story and whether or not it was likely to be of interest to the general public. With this "news sense" the reporter could discern the most important and valuable facts from amongst the many gathered and turn them into news items. Through "analysis and investigation" of developments a prediction arrived at "scientifically" should be possible about the appearance of important news. Reporters looked into whether a proposed story would provide useful knowledge, reflect the plans and instructions of the Party, encourage economic progress or social and political improvements, reflect the interests of the masses, or have a good moral educative effect on the society. The Party authorities were not concerned whether "news sense" defined within their system had any connection with Western concepts of news sense.

The Chinese reporters and editors presented events, people and issues to induce their public to participate more efficiently as capable workers within the overall socio-political economic organization for the common good The baodao sixiang reporting mentality of the reporters was formed.

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73 Lu Yunfan, op. cit., 115.

by absorbing the **baodao tishi** (reporting guidelines) from the editorial department, their 'thorough' understanding developed from practical work, the study of the Party's general and specific policies, and of topics raised by the leadership and masses\(^75\). The "news sense"\(^76\), which principally meant political acumen\(^77\), made him focus on "what problems had to be solved urgently for the masses". For effective public news reporting that sense had to be continually sharpened. When the journalists carried out propaganda reporting\(^78\) of the way in which district (committees) and work units were performing the 'central work tasks', they must use the Party's general principles and specific policies as the main basis for differentiation of newsworthiness.

**TRUTHFUL REPORTING**

Chinese journalists were continually exhorted to strive for the truth. The word truth was used in two ways. One was the ideal and public "truthfulness" of reports, that they should be based on fact. The second was an overall concept of the way the world is and should be - a mythical or philosophical "truth". A journalist had always to uphold the "truth" as spelled out by the Party's ideology, when writing for the public. Public news reports were a tool of government. They must serve the political ends of those who know what the "truth" (the orthodox doctrine or dogma) is -


\(^76\) *xinwen mingan*

\(^77\) *dongchali*. Lu Yunfan, op. cit., 115.

\(^78\) *xuanchuan baodao*
that the proletariat arising to defend its own interests and exercise dictatorship over other citizens is an inevitable and good historical step. Certain writers explained that the "political nature" of the proletariat was based on and governed by objective reality and thus identical with truthfulness. They therefore advised journalists that because the interests of the people generally were identical with those of the proletariat there was no need to manufacture facts or reality in news reports.80

Another writer explained emphasis on truth thus: the basic goal of proletarian news propaganda is to propel the people to arise and fight for their interests when the truth is shown to them through the propagation of Party policy.81 Under other political systems, namely the "capitalist", the news reports could only have a truthfulness on the surface and could not embody essential truth. Truth would be reflected in news reports through the basic tasks set for news workers: to propagate the philosophical basis of the Communist Party( the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism and of Mao Zedong Thought, the scientific world view of dialectical materialism and historical materialism) and through reporting in accordance with that basis educate and assist people to correctly perceive the world and thus change it.82

Presenting the truth in newspaper reports was thus not a matter of straight factual reporting but of being "truthful" by purposefully using facts. As Gan Xifen pointed out, "reflection of the facts is not the same as reflection of the truth of the period".83 This truthful reflection was embodied

81 Li Xiangming, Xinwen Xiezuo Changshi, Broadcast Publishing House, 1892, 49.
82 ibid., 51.
83 Gan Xifen, Xinwen Lilun Jichu, 121.
in the ideological basis of the ruling Party. It involved presenting the developmental changes of the period and the political meaning of it. All that was written up in news reports for the public must be grounded in Party policies and tactical principles. Reports used the 'correct' ideological viewpoint to reflect 'reality' and help readers to 'correctly' understand the reality. Issues raised had to be strongly directed or goal-oriented and had to motivate the people to carry out their economic and social responsibilities.

A major principle of "truthful" reporting was based on the abovementioned premise that the more positive aspects of PRC society were more prevalent than the negative. The Party needed to have this accepted in order that its rule be maintained. Thus the "correct reflection of objective reality" must stress the praiseworthy aspects. To achieve this, selection of news for public reports must concentrate on reflecting the general state of affairs, the norms of economic, political and social life - irrespective of whether these were normative (what should be) or empirical (fact).

Partial states or temporary phenomena were not considered worth reporting. Journalists must understand how to separate the main current from the minor currents, the inevitable or certain from the extraordinary, essence from phenomena, the usual from the exceptional. Truth was achieved in newspaper reporting by presenting the mythical or philosophical truth and selection of mainstream currents which illustrated this truth rather than the

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85 XWZX, No. 3, 1979, 3.
86 Jubu
87 Li Xiangming, op. cit., 53.
unusual or exceptional events. Truth was, theoretically, relative to the interests of those one served. A PRC journalist had to adhere to the ideological or philosophical truth laid down by the Party, always writing from the "correct" stand-point of the Party and people.

IMBALANCE

The overall or comprehensive picture should be presented through newspaper propaganda. To this end journalists are warned against the presentation of pianmian xing (an unbalanced or one-sided) state of affairs. Li Xiangming described "imbalance" as a professional sickness and major reason for the creation of untrue news reports. He stated three categories of "imbalance" - being "absolutist" about any matter through presenting it as totally good or totally bad so over-simplifying affairs; attribution of high production results to several major different policies such as the grasping of ideological work, success of management work, and family planning; and reporting only the good aspects and none of the bad. The distortion of reality in newspapers during the term of the "Gang of Four" period is attributed to journalists employing these three categories of "imbalance."^89

Li's views stated here depended upon his basic premise, that news reports would not influence the masses and therefore play their required role unless the "truth" was employed. He was talking about using methods for presenting reality which created the impression of truth in peoples' minds. Since he saw the former three categories as not convincing readers he

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^88 Li Xiangming, op. cit., 55.

^89 ibid, 49.
dismissed them as useless for convincing the public.

TIMING OF PUBLICATION

Editors were expected to be aware of the time-effectiveness\(^{90}\) of the news, of the way in which the issue or question had previously been handled and the degree to which it had been propagated previously\(^{91}\). News might appear a lot later than the events described therein. If the political timing was not right then the news report would be suppressed either temporarily or permanently. The suppression of news or delay in its open publication until a more 'suitable moment' was a common phenomenon throughout the nations of the USSR and Eastern Europe governed by Communist Parties\(^{92}\). In selecting a "new and original angle" for a PRC newspaper item, news gatherers and distributors were still required to report "in accordance with the trend of the Party"s general and specific policies and its practical work in order to play the instructing role of news to the highest limit"\(^{93}\).

According to Chinese philosophy of the role of the press, the politically "opportune moment" must arrive first and the "effects" of reporting the news must be considered. Clause 5 of the Rules for Journalists actually stated "Pay attention to the social effects of news manuscripts. Acceptance or rejection of material, expression of the content, the heading, choice of words and punctuation must all be highly responsible to the Party

\(^{90}\) shixiaoxing,

\(^{91}\) Tang Li, Huang Yongxi and Chen Kuiyuan, Xinwen Xiezuo, Guangxi Minzu Chubanshe, 1984, 143-7. He Guangxian in 1983 mentioned "newness of method of expression". See He Guangxian, Xinwen Shijian Mantan, 66-67?


\(^{93}\) Li Xiangming, op. cit., 61.
and the people"\textsuperscript{94}. Researchers in Beijing in 1983 wrote that "Our socialist news enterprises naturally are different from the capitalist news enterprises' "rush for news", (we) must not unilaterally seek speed, (but) ponder the opportunity of the moment and the effects (of the news)\textsuperscript{95}.

A handbook for the writing of news for Chinese journalists in 1975 stated that news had to be topical in a politically timed sense with theoretically each successful news report focused on an important issue at the appropriate moment. To produce such reports, PRC journalists needed a strong ideological background, knowledge of all the inter-related lines and policies of the government and personal first-hand appreciation of how the public was likely to react to reports\textsuperscript{96}.

Wang Chen noted that because of political requirements the news had suffered - journalists and editors seemed to have assumed that a few days early or late in reporting news was not of great importance next to the greater priority of political requirements\textsuperscript{97}. In 1980 and 1981 one handbook advised that speed and timeliness of news reports could not be seen separately from the opportunity of the moment\textsuperscript{98}. While in the 1980s there has been some disagreement in journalistic circles about the political requirement to suppress news, Hu Yaobang reminded all news workers in 1985 that "The timing of

\textsuperscript{94} Jizhe Shouze, op cit

\textsuperscript{95} Dai Bang, Qian Xinbo, Lu Huimin, editors, Xinwenxue Jiben Zhishi Jiangzuo. Academy of Social Sciences' Institute of Journalism Research, Renmin Ribao Chubanshe, June, 1983, volume 1, 150.

\textsuperscript{96} Yunnan Daxue Zhongwenxi Xinwen Zhanye bianxie, Xinwen Xiezuo, 1975.

\textsuperscript{97} Wang Chen, Xinwen Xiezuo Mantan, 11.

\textsuperscript{98} Xiaoxi he tongxun, op. cit., 7.
important news must be subordinated to political tasks". He directed publicly through the *Guangming Daily* that "Some important matters should be temporarily withheld from publication... The timeliness of important news must be subordinated to political tasks. That which must be swiftly reported must be swiftly reported, that which must be delayed must be delayed, that which must be suppressed must be suppressed, and for some items we must distinguish between insiders and outsiders. In other words the authorities required still that news be controlled and distributed according to the judgment and priorities of the political leaders.

**PUBLIC NEWS REPORTS**

All news items raised, and provided solutions for, major problems. Straight news items, the *xiaoxi* and *tongxun* forms, were slanted narrations of fact. These were expected not to contain fabrications of facts but must have an 'ideological' character. In other words the selection and analysis of the facts must be politically in line with the 'class' viewpoint the Party wishes to be accepted in society. The shorter *xiaoxi* (items) had to embody the stand-point and viewpoints of the Party through the narration of affairs and events, illustrating principles or "truths". Longer *tongxun* (news reports) presented characters and events in greater detail. These might employ narrative, description and discussion amongst other methods of writing. They evaluated the characters and events presented, spreading the

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100 *shijianxing*

101 *nei*

102 *waid.*

103 Hu Yaobang, op. cit.
'work experience' and introducing different localities within the nation\textsuperscript{104}.

**Diaocha baogao** (investigative reports) examined issues and pointed out to readers the 'direction' or 'path' to take in solving similar problems. The investigative reports of Chinese social and working life which reach the masses or general public do not include the whole of the stories which the journalists have covered and reported. Newspaper stories contain carefully edited and presented versions of the journalistic investigations which have been deemed suitable for the 'education' of the people and informative for workers and professionals to achieve progress in their occupations. The journalist's reports which appear in the press thus are much more limited than his investigative assignments. Investigative reports published were designed to point out to people the 'direction and path' for solution of a new problem while embodying the policies and measures to be used in doing so\textsuperscript{105}. These were reports which went into greater depth than straight news items. They theoretically should be comprehensive, telling how a situation was at the beginning, how afterwards, how now, what the masses did, what the leadership did, the 'contradictions' and struggles which occurred and their results and the subsequent development in peoples' understanding of such situations. Investigative reports appeared in the newspapers under various headings including **jizhe laixin** (letter from a journalist), **caifang zhaji, gongzuo yanjiu** (work research reports), **tantao yu jianyi** (enquiry and proposal), and **duzhe laixin** (letter from a reader)\textsuperscript{106}.

\textsuperscript{104} Cihai Fence, Jan 1980, 32.

\textsuperscript{105} Yunnan Daxue, Xinwen Xiezuo, op. cit., 97-98.

\textsuperscript{106} ibid.
Shuping and pinglun (commentaries) were intended to explain to people through a process of argumentation what were the 'correct' and 'incorrect' attitudes to take on any issue. The style for comment manuscripts was lunshuowen (argumentation). This was a reasoned article which uses discussion and reasoning to bring to light 'the basic nature and rules of objective matter(s)'. It 'directly expounded the writer's viewpoint'. It answered the different questions raised by pointing out which were 'correct' and why so and which are 'incorrect'. It told people 'what they ought to do and what they ought not'. The process used was called lunzheng (expounding and proving). The writer had a lunti (main argument) or lundian (point), lunju (grounds) for it, and lunzheng fangfa (a method of proof). The thesis or point was the central thought of the piece of argumentation and must be: 'correct' according to Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong thought and stand the test of 'objective reality', 'clear' meaning clarity of where the writer stood either in favour of the subject or opposed to it, what was 'correct' and 'incorrect', whether the thesis was right or wrong. The grounds explained why one party or behaviour was right and another wrong and were established through a combination of facts and theory. The method of proof used could be either inductive or deductive. The inductive method meant arrangement of factual materials of specific examples to prove a general principle. The deductive method used theoretical materials - 'universal principles' (Marxist viewpoints), generally acknowledged definitions, theories and laws from the social and natural sciences to expound and prove a point of view. The 'classics' might be quoted when using the deductive method.\(^{107}\)

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\(^{107}\) Yunnan, op. cit., 97-98.
After gathering news into the news offices, Chinese journalists and editors prepared reports for the internal bulletins and for the newspapers. Reports for Party leaders could be more factual and comprehensive than newspaper reports. Leaders sometimes used internal journalistic accounts to detect shortcomings of inferiors and to consider the practical applications of their policies. In preparing material for the public, staff had to ensure that the effect on public opinion would suit the Party's intentions. The overall picture presented was supposed to be largely positive and encouraging, containing nothing detrimental to the Party's authority. Facts were considered a more important component of newspaper coverage after 1978, but remained subordinate to the effect which the facts were chosen to create. Sometimes publication of news would be delayed until the politically opportune moment, while other news never appeared in the papers.
CHAPTER FIVE: INTERACTION WITH POLITICAL AUTHORITIES

In previous chapters it has been apparent that news collection and circulation through the news offices has been influenced strongly by Party requirements. In chapter three, it was also clear that journalists' had a distinct professional role in news gathering and redistribution. Apart from the expectations of journalists and requirements made through the Rules for Journalists, other factors of direct or indirect administration of all news offices by Party organizations also affected journalists' work. Occasionally in the journalists' professional magazines and in books written for their training and reference, it was hinted that journalists actually did battle with or negotiated against Party pressures to suppress or delay public news output. Several very effective controls were maintained by the Party authorities over the news offices. In this chapter the general interaction between journalists and political authorities is examined. The notorious case of delayed reporting of an oilrig disaster is discussed in some detail to demonstrate the conflict between journalists and higher authorities. Finally, a famous Communist Party journalist is used to illustrate that the degree of dictatorship in the political climate severely affects at least the public reporting for which even some trusted journalists might wish.

PARTY SUPERVISION OF NEWS OFFICES

In 1978, apart from a few short-lived mimeographed publications, there were no news publications in China which were not subject to Party supervision. The committees of the Party at different levels ran many of the major newspapers and some broadcasting stations. For example, the national
newspaper, **People’s Daily**, was the official paper of the Central Committee¹, and the national Army paper, the **Liberation Army Daily**, was the official newspaper of the "CPC Central Committee's Military Committee, directly under² the leadership of the General Political Bureau"³. Beijing's major daily newspaper, the **Beijing Daily**, was the "official newspaper of the CCP Beijing City committee. Other local papers were organs of bureaux of the committee, such as the **Beijing Mineworks Paper**, the organ of the Beijing City Committee's Mines Bureau. In Shanghai, the city's **Liberation Daily** was "the organ of the Shanghai City Committee". Provincial newspapers were organs of provincial committees of the Party. The **Hebei Daily**, for example, was the organ of the Hebei Provincial Committee. City level newspapers were organs of City level committees, thus the **Handan Daily** was the organ of the CCP Handan District Committee⁴.

Article 27 of the 1956 version of the Party's Constitution stipulated that:

> The newspapers issued by Party organizations at all levels must publicize the decisions and policy of the Central Party organizations, of higher Party organizations and of their own Party organizations⁵.

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¹ XWZX 1982 entry for RMRB, 197.

² zhishu

³ XWNJ 1982 entry for Jiefang Zhun Bao, 198.

⁴ The Central Peoples' Broadcasting Station was (originally under the leadership of the Party's Broadcasting Affairs Bureau and now) under the Broadcasting and Television Department The Beijing Peoples' Broadcasting Station was under the direct leadership of the CCP Beijing City Committee.

Those major newspapers and broadcasting stations which were not organs of Party committees but of other organizations or government bureaus were also subject to direct Party control. This was made clear by Article 14 of the 1977 Party Constitution which reads:

*State organs, the PLA and militia, trade unions, the Communist Youth League, poor and lower middle peasant associations, women’s federations and other revolutionary mass organizations, must all accept the Party’s absolute leadership*.6

Examples of news offices which were subject to Party dictate because of this, included those which produced nationally circulated papers such as the *Workers’ Daily*, organ of the National Trade Union; the *China Youth Paper* as the paper of the Communist Youth League’s Central Committee; *China Peasants’ Paper* "under the leadership of" the State Agricultural Committee; the *China Finance and Trade Paper* "*kangshu* (under) the leadership of" the State Council’s Finance and Trade Small Group.7

A possible exception to Party direction, at least in theory, might have been the *United Paper*8 a bi-weekly which resumed publication in February 1980 under the Chinese Guomindang Revolutionary Committee. Yet, it was still "under the leadership of" the CCP. Since all of the major mass media were subject to Party leadership, the work of these news offices - both in the

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7 see entries for each of these newspapers in XWNJ 1982. The Chongqing Peoples’ Broadcasting Station was under a system of joint leadership by the Chongqing Broadcasting Affairs Bureau and the Chongqing Peoples’ Broadcasting Station Implementation Bureau. The Shanxi television station was under the leadership of the Shanxi Province Broadcasting Bureau. From the end of 1978 the Shanghai Television station’s head was the Shanghai City Broadcasting Affairs Bureau Deputy Chief.

8 Tuanjie Bao
collection and redistribution of news - was tied to the political requirements of Party leaders.

JOURNALISM AND THE STATE CONSTITUTION

The State Constitution of the Peoples' Republic of China, both in the 1978 version and the 1982 draft, referred to the work of news offices when it made statements concerning the news profession - journalism. Included in the 1978 version were the words: "The state encourages and assists the creative endeavours of citizens engaged in ... education, literature, art, journalism, publishing, "

The Constitution thus provided for certain freedoms for cultural activities, journalistic and publishing work without specifying that only those enterprises which the state supported would receive "encouragement" and assistance.

When a Draft of the revised Constitution was published in April 1982, the equivalent article included the added words:" - endeavours conducive to the interests of the people and to the progress of mankind" and all reference to journalism and publishing work had been omitted

This is taken from Article 52. It appears in Chapter Three of the Constitution, which is subtitled "The Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens" (Printed in The China Quarterly, June 1978, no. 74) This Constitution is known as The Constitution of the Peoples' Republic of China, adopted on 5th March 1978 by the Fifth National Peoples' Congress of the Peoples' Republic of China at its first session. Article 52 read in full:" Citizens have the freedom to engage in scientific research, literary and artistic creation and other cultural activities. The State encourages and assists the creative endeavours of citizens engaged in science, education, literature, art, journalism, publishing, public health, sport and other cultural work."

Article 45 read: "Citizens of the PRC have the freedom to engage in scientific research and artistic creation and other cultural activities. The state encourages and assists the creative endeavours of citizens engaged in education, science and technology, literature, art and other cultural fields - endeavours conducive to the interests of the people and to the progress of mankind." This appeared in "Chapter Two: The fundamental rights and..."
Principles" a new Article decreeing state involvement in news enterprises was included. In part, Article 20 read: "The state systematically develops... publication, journalism, radio and television broadcasting, ..."11.

PARTY MEMBERS

Many of the major news offices were staffed largely by Party members who were restricted by the Party Discipline they agreed to when they joined. According to an explanation given in the *Workers' Daily* in June 1980, the Party Constitution and other Party regulations were specifically intended for Party members12. The two legal writers answering a query on the relationship between Party regulations and laws and State laws explained for all readers that "... an action which contravenes Party regulations and laws is not necessarily an action contravening State laws; but any act which contravenes state laws is generally speaking an act in contravention of Party regulations and laws"13.

The Party Constitution requires of its members in Article 2, no.7, that they must:

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11 Draft of the Revised Chinese Constitution fr NCNA in English, ibid. In full Article 20 read:"The state systematically develops socialist education, science, health work and sports, literature and art, publication, journalism, radio and televsion broadcasting, libraries, museums, cultural halls and other cultural undertakings."

12 ostensibly from a citizen of Hunan province.

13 Law Letterbox, "What is the Relationship between..." in *Workers Daily*, 12/6/80, 4.
"...observe Party discipline and the laws of the state and strictly guard Party and state secrets..."\(^{14}\).

Party members often had access to much privileged news material. To be on the safe side it was better to leave out sensitive material or seek permission before disseminating news which senior leaders might classify under the heading State Secret. A *Peoples' Daily* editorial of 11 April 1980 said: "The third principle of the 'Guiding Principles for Inner-Party Political Life' stipulated:

'Every Party member must strictly guard Party and state secrets and fight resolutely against the practice of divulging Party and state secrets. When reading documents, hearing relayed reports and attending Party meetings, all Party members must strictly observe the discipline of guarding secrets and are strictly forbidden to divulge Party secrets to their dependants, friends and other people who are not supposed to know about them. All Party members must note that there must be a distinction between insiders and outsiders. All Party matters which are not permitted to be publicized outside the Party may not be disseminated"\(^{15}\).

Journalists often belonged to that group of insiders and knew the requirements. During the course of their work news office staff had much contact with leading organs, participated in meetings and read important documents so were privy to many Party and State secrets\(^{16}\).

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\(^{15}\) *Peoples' Daily* editorial 11/4/80 trans in *Summary of World Broadcasts*.

\(^{16}\) *Lan Hongwen, Xinwen Caifang Xue*, Chinese Peoples' University Publishing House,1984, 84.
STATE SECRETS AND PUBLICATION

The State Secrets Regulations were published by the Xinhua News Service in April 1980. The Regulations had originally been promulgated in 1951. In the absence of revised or new regulations and laws these must be regarded as the official guidelines which applied to "state secret" material in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The subjects of potential news decreed as state secrets comprised an awesome list.

Article 2 of the State Secrets regulations set out the subject matter which the State decreed constituted secrets of the State. The list covered large spheres of information about a range of subjects for which a news disseminator would have to seek advice or permission. The list included defence, foreign affairs, public security, economy, transport and communications, economic plans, resources, meteorology, geographical surveying, scientific inventions, culture, education, public health, medicine, law, nationalities and overseas Chinese affairs, "internal and personnel secrets", letters or documentary communications containing such matters.

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17 It should be noted that organizations named in these Regulations no longer existed. Application of this law thus proceeded in the peculiar fashion of the PRC where rights and duties were adjudicated through a mixture of written regulations and current political policy.
addresses of anywhere containing matter related to state secrets. Almost every aspect of the life of the PRC therefore theoretically could be full of state secrets. It would be reasonable to conclude that the more news staff wrote the more likely they were to reveal secret information. To quote one writer on Chinese journalism practice: "From looking at the reports which have revealed secrets in the [recent] past, and the above articles, the easiest area to reveal secrets was the economic. This is due to the key reporting being of the Four Modernizations [where] economic reports are the greatest number..."  

Most significant of all the stipulations were the last two. Number 16 read:

"All state affairs which have not yet been decided upon, or which have been decided upon but have not yet been made public."  

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18 The "Provisional Regulations on Guarding State Secrets", trans. in Summary of World Broadcasts 15 April 1980 pp BII/1-3. Article 2 in full read: "State secrets include the following basic categories: (1) All national defence and military plans and construction measures; (2) secret information about the authorized strength, designation, actual strength, equipment, stationing, movement and deployment of all armed forces units, about logistics, ordnance, construction and so forth; (3) foreign affairs secrets; (4) public security secrets; (5) State Financial Plan, State Budget Estimate, budget and final accounts and other financial secrets; (6) State banking, trade and customs plans and banking, trade and customs affairs secrets; (7) secret information about railways, transport, postal and telecommunications services; (8) secret information about natural resource surveying and mapping, and so forth; (10) scientific inventions and discoveries, cultural, educational, public health and medical secrets; (11) secret information about legislative, judicial, procuratorial and control affairs; (12) secret information about nationalities and overseas Chinese affairs; (13) internal and personnel secrets; (14) files, cipher codes, official seals and all documents, telegrams, letters, data, statistics, figures, charts, books and periodicals concerning State secrets; (15) all organizations, establishments, warehouses, places, and so forth which have not yet been decided upon, or which have been decided upon but have not yet been made public; and (17) all other State affairs which should be kept secret.

19 Lan Hongwen, op. cit., 85-86.

20 Regulations
and Number 17: "All other state affairs which should be kept secret"\textsuperscript{21}.

These two broad categories should be interpreted in the light of the relationship between law and Chinese Communist Party policy. Sun Guohua wrote in the \textit{Guangming Daily} in February 1979: "Law is based on Party policy and is aimed at the thorough implementation of it"\textsuperscript{22}. Thus any statement of policy was more authoritative than the promulgation of a law and the republication of a set of legal guidelines, even though out-of-date, represented the prevailing attitude of the leadership. Thus journalists would be wise to take heed of current Party policy and to reveal no information which the Party had not in some other way already made public, unless specifically directed them to make it public.

Such broad stipulations should have led to great caution on the part of news office staff and heavy reliance on understanding of current Party policy. Most often checking with Party superiors or Party committees or avoidance reporting sensitive news altogether would have resulted from knowledge of leaders' attitudes as expressed through the republishing of the State Secrets regulations.

Two articles of the 1950 State Secrets regulations directly addressed the role of radio stations and newspaper offices. Organizations running radio stations in the 1950s were required to "submit their reports for approval by the Government Administration Council of the Central People's Government or by the people's governments of big administrative regions (military and

\textsuperscript{21} ibid.

\textsuperscript{22} Sun Guohua, 24, Feb 79 "The Relationship Between Party Policy and Law".
administrative committees)."23 Article 11 read: "The publishing and reporting of news...concerning State policies that fall within the scope of the Government Administration Council shall be issued by a unified method by the Council; those that deal with military affairs shall be issued by a unified method by the People's Revolutionary Committee of the Central People's Government. News...published by the press and broadcast over the radio are not permitted to touch on State secrets. The various news agencies, newspaper agencies, broadcasting stations and publishing houses should devise and establish a method of examining news...in order to guard State secrets."24

CLEARANCE PRIOR TO PUBLICATION

In the 1970s and 1980s, the most important items of news and comment had to be cleared by members of government departments prior to publication. These included all news which touched on policies "currently being implemented", anything which might contain matter deemed a State or Party secret25, and material that "could create problems which concern foreign affairs or foreign nationals"26. Manuscripts containing such news had first to be examined and approved by the newspaper's chief editor and

23 Article 10 read in full: "For those people's governments at all levels and the various armed forces which must set up radio stations, government organizations shall, according to their levels, submit their reports for approval by the Government Administration Council of the Central People's Government or by the people's governments of big administrative regions (military and administrative committees). Military organizations shall, according to their levels, submit their reports for approval by the General Staff Department of the People's Revolutionary Military Committee of the Central People's Government, or by field army headquarters and military regions."

24 Article 11 of Regulations.


then sent over to the "department leading [the matters concerned]" for its examination and approval. News reports which contained criticisms were taken very seriously too and such manuscripts had to be checked out with the Party leadership prior to their publication. Public criticism had to be carried out "under the leadership of" the Party committee, and journalists were required to qingshi (seek instructions) from the leadership and obtain its zhichi (support) before publication of important critical materials. For the publication of reports on less sensitive issues, senior editorial staff were supposed to have a sense of responsibility to the Party "so intense" that they would not cause "errors" in the propaganda carried out through their newspaper.

Being privy to many secrets, staff of news offices were expected to be careful to whom they spoke about these. Article 15 of the State secrets regulations refers to the divulging, presumably without intent, of state secret material: "Any person losing classified State materials or divulging State secrets through negligence shall be punished according to the seriousness of the case." In February 1982, a "responsible person" of the Zhongguo Caimao Bao (China Finance and Trade News) was given a five year prison sentence for divulging to foreigners details of the seventeenth meeting of the Fifth National Peoples' Congress and the time, place, agenda and

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27 XWXIMCD, 108.
28 Gan Xifen, 155.
30 Regulations, op. cit.
31 This was probably Li Guangyi, formerly chief editor of the paper. Note that this newspaper ceased to exist in 1983. It was replaced by the Economic Daily.
details of proposed resolutions of the planned sixth plenum of the 11th Congress of the Party. He was also stripped of his Party membership.

TREASON AS RESTRICTION ON NEWS WORK

Serious repercussions or punishment were set out in Article 13 of the Regulations where it was stated that the sale or deliberate divulgence of State secrets to "enemies" or domestic or foreign "profiteers" would be considered an act of counter-revolution. The revelation of State secrets was considered by government authorities to be a political crime known in the Party's parlance as "counter-revolutionary offences" the equivalent of treason. The perpetrators thus were subject to punishment and their activities had to be suppressed.

Two State laws or acts dealt with the crime of counter-revolution during this period. The Counter-Revolutionary Act of 1951 applied at least until January 1980 as the only known law on such activities. The first comprehensive Criminal Law of the PRC was adopted by the fifth National Peoples' Congress on the 1st of July 1979 to go into force on the 1st of January 1980. It contained a whole chapter under 'Specific Provisions' on

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32 Lan Hongwen, op. cit., 86. Beijing City Intermediate Peoples' Court tried his case and sentenced the "betrayer of confidential matters" to five years of imprisonment. The Party organization of his newspaper office also decided to expel him from the Party.

33 Regulations, op. cit. Article 13 in full read: "Any person behaving in one of the following ways shall be found guilty of being a counter-revolutionary and shall be punished according to the regulations for the punishment of counter-revolutionaries: (1) Any person who sells State secrets to enemies at home and abroad; (2) any person who deliberately divulges State secrets to enemies at home and abroad; and (3) any person who sells State secrets to domestic and foreign profiteers.

34 Article 18 of the 1978 version of the Constitution included the stipulation that: "The State safeguards the socialist system, suppresses all treasonable and counter-revolutionary activities, punishes all traitors and counter-revolutionaries, and punishes new-born bourgeois elements and other bad elements".
counter-revolution. In spite of the existence since 1980 of this new Law, as at June 1981 it was understood that the 1951 Counter-Revolutionary Act had not been replaced, revised or revoked\(^{35}\). In the case of the counter-revolutionary acts it was unlikely any news disseminator would be very differently treated even if the old Act were revoked\(^{36}\). *

The criminal offence of counter-revolution was defined in Article 90 of the Criminal Law:

"Counter-revolutionary offences are those for the purpose of overthrowing the political power of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialist system and jeopardizing the PRC"\(^{37}\).

The relevant section of the 1951 Act, Article 10 (Parts 2 and 3) was very similar in wording and tone to Article 102 (Parts 1 and 2) of the Criminal Law. Certain offences were described in Article 10 of the Counter-Revolutionary Act. It read:

"...one of the following crimes aimed at incitement and provoking discontent ... (2) Sowing dissension and hostility among the nationalities, democratic classes, parties and people's organizations, or undermining the

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\(^{35}\) Hungdah Chiu noted this in the context of his observation that "... the PRC still wants to retain some of its flexible laws for political manoeuvre" thus "... the continued validity of formerly enacted vague criminal legislation such as the 1951 Counter-revolutionary Act has been explicitly confirmed" See Note 86 on 23 of Hungdah Chiu, Socialist Legalism: Reform and Continuity in Post-Mao People's Republic of China.

\(^{36}\) It is understood that the Act has never been replaced, revised or revoked, although the Criminal Law probably applies since early 1980. The first comprehensive Criminal Law of the PRC was adopted by the National Peoples' Congress on the 1st July 1979 and went into force on the 1st of January 1980.

\(^{37}\) Criminal Law
unity of the people and the government; (3) Engaging in counter-revolutionary agitation, fabricating and spreading false rumours.\(^{38}\)

Article 102 of The Criminal Law detailed two offences which might well apply to news office staff. During the course of their public reporting, they would have to beware of their writings: "Inciting the masses to resist arrest and violating the law and statute of the state" or the contents thereof being used to "spread propaganda inciting the overthrow of the political power of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialist system.\(^ {39}\). Since the work of journalists often dealt with political or sensitive matters, and they were propagandists by profession, insufficient caution could conceivably have led to commission of either of the above crimes.

STATE REGULATIONS AND LEADERS' DIRECTIVES

The state also has issued various regulations specifically governing news work. The Government, or rather the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, issued decrees controlling the activities of publishing, broadcasting and "propaganda work", with the same binding power as laws.\(^ {40}\)

\(^{38}\) Counter-Revolutionary Act

\(^{39}\) The Criminal Law, adopted by the fifth NPC on 1 July 1979, as it appeared in the Peoples' Daily on 7 July 1979 and was translated in SWB, FE/6172/C/1-26 on 20 July 1979. In full Article 102 read: "Any of the following acts carried out for counter-revolutionary purposes will be punishable by fixed-term imprisonment, detention, surveillance or deprivation of political rights for not less than five years: (1) Inciting the masses to resist arrest and violating the law and statute of the state; and (2) Using counter-revolutionary slogans, leaflets or other means to spread propaganda inciting the overthrow of the political power of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialist system."

\(^{40}\) According to Article 25 of the 1978 State Constitution, the Committee exercised the power to "... interpret the Constitution and laws and to enact decrees."
According to Article 32, the State Council, answerable to the Congress, exercised the power to:

"formulate administrative measures, issue decisions and orders and verify their execution in accordance with the Constitution, laws and decrees".

Article 55 of the 1982 State Constitution stated:

The NPC and the Standing Committee of the NPC exercise the legislative power of State and make laws and decrees.

Decisions and resolutions, aside from laws, adopted by the NPC or the Standing Committee of the NPC are collectively called decrees. Decrees have a binding force equivalent to laws."

The government issued several decrees to control and regulate news dissemination through means of mass communication. Various controls written into documents, in the form of Directives and internal instructions to the news media also restricted public circulation of important news. Directions by leaders of the Party's Central Committee in their "Talks" must also be observed by all of the rest of the Party. In the 1982 Chinese Journalism Year-book tanhua (talks), a baogao (report), other unspecified writings and even editorials of newspapers were listed under wenxian (news work documents).

The combined effect of the government and Party regulations, and directives, has been to bestow a highly political role on important news

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41 These were gathered together in an internal set of three volumes by the Xinhua News Agency.
gathering in the PRC. It has also concentrated the influential news gathering and wide dissemination of news in the hands of people trusted and trained by the Party or its institutions.

OTHER POLITICAL CONTROLS

At the national level, the State Council of the central government ran one large department with some influence on dissemination of news and information and four agencies with direct responsibilities for information dissemination. The Ministry of Culture apparently had some input. The agencies were the Central Broadcasting Administration, the State Radio and Television Bureau, the State Publication Administration Bureau, and the Xinhua News Agency.42

The Xinhua News Agency was a huge organization with responsibility for the centralized distribution of news released by the State and Party to other news organs. In 1978-82 it was the major news gatherer overseas and at the national and local level. Xinhua News Agency, according to the China Journalism Year-book 1982, was "the state news agency of the PRC led by the Chinese Communist Party."43

It had the largest news gathering facilities and disseminating means and powers during this period of any single news collector or disseminator in the PRC. The authority it had as sole disseminator of important State news made


43 Entry for Xinhua News Agency in XWNJ, 1982.
it potentially the most influential news disseminator. According to a regulation of the Information Administration of the Government Administration Council in 1950, all newspapers had to print in full important news releases and special articles distributed by Xinhua. From questioning a newspaper editor-in-chief of the Party Central Committee's Guangming Daily in 1985, it appeared that this regulation still held.

Information about the apparatus within the Party with responsibility for overseeing news work was sparse. The Central Committee's Propaganda Department had, in 1980 at least, several bumen (offices) which conceivably dealt with news dissemination: the Propaganda Office, the News Office, and the Publishing Office. In 1979 the News office was apparently called a ju (Bureau). It can be safely assumed that these Party organizations had responsibility for drafting policy for news dissemination.

Having all publications under the supervision of Party committees or run by Party members ensured that editors and journalists were answerable to the Party. All decisions taken and all news dissemination therefore was subject to Party requirements and controls.

The ultimate political restriction on news dissemination is best expressed in a quote from the 1980 handbook on writing news items that outlines the Chinese Communist requirements of the Party-run press during the period under consideration:

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45 ibid., see Houn, Franklin, 91 and Wu.
Our newspapers, broadcasting stations and news agencies are all the Party's propaganda tools, all serving the socialist revolution and socialist construction. News reporting must be the tool of public opinion for the consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship, (and) the building of socialism, the ideological weapon for uniting the people, educating the people and attacking enemies.

DIVERGENCE FROM LEADERSHIP

The news offices have sometimes diverged from the political dictates of their Party committee. From 1978 until early 1981 some mass media showed sufficient diversification and distance from Central Committee control that in February 1981 the Central Committee issued Document No. 7, "Decision on Guiding Principles for Current Newspaper News and Broadcast Propaganda". The gist of this document was that the Party's highest leadership found serious fault with the news offices - a lack of "actively, frequently and systematically propagating the Four Basic Principles". These were, of course, adherence to the socialist road, to the proletarian dictatorship, to the leadership of the Party, and to Marxism-Leninism Mao Zedong Thought.

In other words, the leaders felt that too much independence had been exercised in the publication of news reports. The issuing of Document No. 7 pointed out that Party news organs had not fully upheld their responsibilities


47 CC Document No. 7. Printed in Feiqing Yuebao, Taiwan, Vol. 25, No. 1, 78-80, 88, and Vol. 26, No.6, 84-87 as "Guanyu Dangqian Baokan Xinwen Guangbo Xuanchuan Fangzhen de Jueding".

48 On 30 March, 1979, Deng Xiaoping made a speech stressing "Adherence to the Four Basic Principles": 
according to the Constitution, and in obedience to the Central Committee. The Central Committee was ordering the Party papers and Party supervised papers to come back into line to publish as directed instead of exercising independence. Apparently too much critical public reporting had appeared in the newspapers as had too much discussion of matters which the Party leaders preferred to keep internal and private.

Theoretically, when there were differences of opinion, these could be brought up, but the final say-so rested with the Central Committee. If the higher Party levels did not decide to accept a certain view or opinion, it could be individually acted upon. Article 12 of the Party Constitution stated:

"...If a Party member holds different views with regard to the decisions or directives of the Party organizations, [that member] is allowed to reserve these views and has the right to bring up the matter for discussion at Party meetings and the right to bypass the immediate leadership and report to higher levels, up to and including the Central Committee and the Chairman of the Central Committee, but the member must resolutely carry out these decisions and directives"\(^{49}\).

If the higher Party authorities wished to, they could deal with divergences through Party discipline and and punish offenders. A Party member would be dealt with according to the Party's internal punishment scale first before being prosecuted under State laws. On paper, and in principle, Party members and all major news media were thus subject to two sets of politico-legal controls, those of the State and those of the Party.

Part of Article 8 of the Party Constitution also affected news dissemination in that:

"...the lower level is subordinate to the higher level, and the entire Party is subordinate to the Central Committee".\(^50\).

The Central Committee was the ultimate authority and decision-maker. All of its directives and decisions must be obeyed. Thus, although Party committees at other levels might have their own propaganda offices these had all to obey the Central Committee Propaganda Department.

Differences of opinions were permitted amongst journalists within the news offices but these had to remain internal. The attitude of Party leaders to journalists having ideas about news publication which conflicted with that of the Party leaders was summed up by the First Secretary of the Gansu Province party committee in 1980. Song Ping, addressing an audience of journalists said: 'Internally in the newspaper office, I support allowing comrades to say what is on their minds and to research problems, allowing them to \textit{fabiao} (express) different \textit{guandian} (views) to enliven thinking; but what is to appear publicly in the newspapers requires caution and must observe the \textit{xuanchuan jilu} (propaganda discipline) [of the Party].'\(^51\)

\textbf{NEGOTIATION}

With all of the pressures on news offices discussed above, and the expectations of journalists mentioned in chapter three, how did news office staff cope with producing reports daily? Journalists and editors had to

\(^{50}\) ibid.

\(^{51}\) Song Ping, "Dangwei yao lingdao hao baozhi" in \textit{XWZX}, No. 6, 1980.
negotiate with Party bosses over the public reporting of sensitive news. It was not a battle of equals because the Party leadership maintained its ultimate authority over all aspects of life and work in the Peoples' Republic. The staffs of news offices did, however, have opinions of their own and when not completely disheartened, fought in their own ways to use newspapers other than as tools of the Party bosses.

In chapter four, a number of barriers to public reporting of news were mentioned. Some leaders feared too much newspaper publicity of important affairs left open "opportunities to hostile powers" for prying out secrets. Prior to 1979, the leadership must have been particularly suspicious of outsiders (foreigners) because the distribution of local newspapers was restricted until then. Too much critical reporting in the newspapers was not acceptable because showing negative aspects of Party rule might lower Party prestige and arouse discontent among the public. This attitude assumed that citizens in China had few alternative news sources and would not be aware of malpractice or corruption unless it was reported in the newspapers. "Useful discussions" of policy matters were allowed in the newspapers but they were generally explanations of decisions already taken rather than open debate that might lead to the rejection of a proposed policy. It was felt that simple solutions and directions had to be presented to lower-level cadres and members of the public otherwise there would be confusion and chaos instead of successful implementation of plans and policies.

52 A play published in 1979 called Kunao ren de xiao The laugh of a worried man set in a newspaper office depicted a graphic scene of disheartened journalists.
JOURNALISTS' DESIRE FOR MORE PUBLIC EXPOSURE

In 1979 and 1980, some journalists were not satisfied with the limited public role their investigation and reporting was allowed to play. Xin Wenbing wrote in News Front expressing his dissatisfaction with the limited role of public reporting. Xin obviously was unhappy that the Tianjin Daily staff had not been at the forefront of swiftly reporting news of events in their district. He cited the capsizing of the Bohai No. 2 oil-rig in November 1979 which Tianjin journalists certainly knew about at the time. Public reporting of that event was not then seriously considered because of the seriousness of the accident, its political repercussions, and the fact that the Party's Central Committee and Tianjin city committee had not given any instructions about the event.

Xin was concerned about barriers to an active role for the public news media and argued that fears of damage caused by too prompt reporting of news were unfounded. Accidents such as the Bohai oil-rig disaster were either not reported or reported only after the matter had been thoroughly investigated, dealt with, and plausible explanations provided. He wrote "When an accident has occurred, it is not reported or else it is reported only after the entire progress of the event has been investigated and cleared up and conclusions drawn about the experience and the lessons to be drawn from it". Xin remarked that swift reporting of some accidents could "arouse peoples' vigilance and guide people in conscientiously providing lessons of experience". In other words, swift reporting would allow journalists to have

53 Xin Wenbing, "Newspapers must Bring the Greatest Initiative Into Play" in XWZX No. 11, 1980, 9-10.

54 zhishi directive
an active political role in the aftermath of such incidents and stir people outside the leadership to take part in the process of clearing up and affixing blame.

Xin was critical also of three other rules about public reporting. A (criminal) case could not be mentioned in the newspapers until after it had been solved. Nor could a project under construction be reported until after it had been completed and was operating. Finally, the authorities would not allow many interesting matters to be discussed in the newspapers - questions being debated, matters in an embryonic state, experimental work, and questions on which opinion was divided. He and other journalists had to wait until the "opinions had matured" and the "problems had been solved". The limit of permissible public reporting was unacceptable to him.

ARGUMENTS TO CONVINCE LEADERS

Zhang Nan, Mao Wenrong and Shi Wenting, in News Front, argued against the views of some Party leaders and news office senior staff about the effects of publicly reporting important news. Zhang argued that since 1957 newspapers had rarely engaged in public reporting or discussion of the bad or unpleasant aspects of Chinese society and working life. He felt this was a serious mistake because denying the public report of the bad eliminated an important "weapon on the news front". Zhang also claimed that baoxi bu baoyou (reporting only the good and not the bad) had the serious consequences of leading the public to believe that the newspapers did not print the truth but were capable only of "talking big". This left the press with little credibility. The newspapers' role had been severely diminished.

55 Zhang Nan, XWZX, 1980, No. 11, 7-9; Mao Wenrong and Shi Wenting, "The Correct Role of Critical Reports" in Xinwen Zhanxian, No. 11, 1980, 6-7.
Zhang addressed five assumptions about the harm public reporting might cause. The first was "That reporting the bad was to discredit [the socialist system, the Party, etc]". Zhang Nan argued that shortcomings, mistakes, calamities and crimes were facts of life which existed whether reported or not. Not publicly reporting these darker aspects of life would not make them disappear. Thus, he wrote some of the "black" should be publicly reported and analysed, and methods for overcoming the problems should be raised. This would motivate people to fight against such undesirable things.

Another view he attacked was that "Reporting the bad could cause people to lose heart". Zhang argued that such positive reporting as "Everything is fine, continues to move forward in leaps, exert all one's strength" during the years of the "Great Leap Forward" only engendered false zeal which soon ran out. If the real difficulties had been told to the masses along with analyses of the real reasons for them, self-criticisms of mistakes, and policies and measures formulated for dealing with these problems, the masses would really be encouraged to battle with the difficulties.

"Reporting the bad will lower the popular trust in the Party and government". Zhang Nan claimed that glossing over errors rather than reporting them was more likely to damage popular trust. He raised the example of the reports on the Bohai oil rig disaster that were finally published and the serious measures the Party and government had used to deal with the culprits. He claimed that when the masses saw through these newspaper reports that the Party and government were speaking the truth, looking after the peoples' interests and dealing with matters according to principle, more popular trust in the Party resulted. Mao and Shi wrote that, generally, critical reports appearing in the newspapers demonstrated that the Party "showed no tolerance of the improper workstyle of bureaucratism".
"Reporting the bad [aspects of society and administration of policies] provides opportunities for enemies". Zhang addressed this criticism by remarking that while enemies or people with ulterior motives could make use of public reports of such matters, but that they also used groundless allegations and conjectures circulated through the verbal channels. He argued that elimination of critical and exposure reporting from the newspapers merely because of this danger was like giving up eating for fear of choking. "If we expose and overcome the negative aspects, that is a display of confidence". Once a public report has been made the rumours have less credence and thus less usefulness to the people with ulterior motives.

"Reporting cases of crime is to engage in capitalist social news". Zhang Nan replied to this objection by saying that only the standpoint from which one reported a crime, and not simply the reporting of it, left a journalist open to such an accusation. Zhang suggested representative cases which contained useful lessons to teach, should be reported in order to frighten the enemy, teach and encourage the masses, and promote public safety and the improvement of the society.

Mao and Shi dealt with another objection to franker reporting - "exposure reporting disrupts work". Mao and Shi claimed that overall, the inclusion of critical reports in the newspapers "increased the confidence of the people to [get on with] the Four Modernizations". They felt that when readers saw exposure reports their "thirsts were slaked" and they gained hope from the apparent strength of the Party's disapproval of wrong doing. They also claimed that critical and exposure reporting actually accelerated the "solution of practical problems."
THE DELAYED REPORTING OF A MAJOR ACCIDENT

The difficulty of achieving timely public reporting was demonstrated in the famous case of the Bohai oil-rig capsize. The public media coverage that lasted for six weeks was held up as an example of "using the full force of public opinion pressure" - frequent exposure through a number of forms of journalistic expression in the public news media. That the reports did not appear in the pages of the newspapers until many months after the accident occurred questions the validity of this official description.

The Bohai No. 2 oil drilling Rig capsized in Bohai Bay on 25 November 1979, resulting in 72 deaths and millions of dollars worth of damage. Apparently no news of the incident or its consequences was published in official Chinese news media until the first public news report by the Xinhua news agency on 21st July, 1980. The news of such a disaster must have travelled far and wide by unofficial channels for months before then, but Party leaders were not prepared to have it reported in their official newspapers until long after investigations and internal reports had been filed.

The first public news article reads like a summary of news items covering several events after the disastrous incident: the Tianjin Municipal Revolutionary Committee had "formed an investigation group"; in late March the Oceanic Petroleum Exploration Bureau organized "inspection of safety

56 ref to article by Xu, Xinwen Caixie Jingyan Tan, 47-50.

57 See Daily Report translation of broadcast Xinhua news item 21 July 1980, in Daily Report (China), 22 July 80, L1-L4 and similar item in Guangming Ribao (GMRB), 22/7/80 , 1 filed through Xinhua News Agency in Tianjin jointly by Peoples' Daily journalist Li Hexin and Xinhua journalist Xia Lin.
work" and began to "remove the hidden causes of accidents"; representatives of national bodies such as the State Economic Commission, State Bureau of Labour and the All-China Federation of Trade Unions were sent to "investigate the incident" at dates unspecified; on 21st April 1980 the Tianjin Municipal Bureau of Labour filed charges with the Municipal People's Procuratorate against persons unspecified in the article, and requested that legal body to investigate the accident and "affix responsibility for the crime"; and on 7th May, that same legal body accepted the "complaint" filed by the abovementioned Bureau of Labour.58

That same first public news article added further news of statistics gathered for a period between 1975 and 1979: "According to incomplete statistics, the [Ocean Petroleum Exploration Bureau of the Ministry of Petroleum Industry] had a total of 1,043 accidents (including over 30 major ones) during the period" and was responsible for 105 deaths, serious injury to 114 people, and "horrifying economic losses".59

The news article summed up a great deal of investigation and listed many separate items of xiaoxi news. It also contained the opinion of the investigative journalists that the disaster was the result of long neglect by the Bureau and thus not accidental juefei ouran60. From a line added to the English version of the item but not contained in the similar item on the front page of the Guangming Daily, a signal was also directly given that the Ministry of Petroleum Industry itself was under investigation and leaders there were likely to fall: 'The "Bohai No. 2" accident also revealed problems

58 ibid. Quotes taken from the English translation.
59 ibid. Quotes taken from English trans.
60 ibid. from GMRB.
in petroleum exploration at sea that have long existed in the Ministry of Petroleum Industry'.

The public and official reporting of these major news items was affected by the prevailing attitude towards all public reporting of recent news. In 1978 and 1979, news of disasters for which senior government or Party leaders might be seen to be responsible was managed so that political mileage could be made out of it in favour of the Party Central Committee's continued authority. National publicizing of such serious damage was delayed until leaders felt they could show how successfully they were dealing with the perpetrators of such errors or crimes, and of course, until they were ready to remove from office certain responsible officials. Public reporting of all the potential and important news in one report, several months after the original news of the incident had broken in xiaodao xiaoxi (informal channels), was politically well-timed, as two lines from a Hong Kong Communist Party mouthpiece on 31 July 1980 admirably demonstrate: "In light of the reports and comments by Beijing's newspapers on this incident, the Central Committee will not let those who fail to perform their duties get by under false pretences. It is necessary to deal with them sternly in order to improve offshore oil exploration and facilitate the smooth progress of the four modernizations in the future".

The oil industry in China was making a poor showing in 1979 and in 1980 Yu Qili was replaced by Yao Yilin as head of the State Planning Commission. Shortly after the first public news stories about the Bohai incident and related issues appeared in the press, it was publicly declared

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61 ibid., L4 of Eng. trans of Xinhua item

62 Ta Kung Pao, See Daily Report trans of item 'Ta Kung Pao Urges Attention to Bohai Oil Rig Disaster', 31 July 80, in DR 1 Aug 80, U1-2.
that the fates of two key and very senior leaders were changed. In August 1980 the Petroleum Minister Song Zhenming was sacked. The vice-premier in charge of oil industry, Kang Shi’en was publicly reprimanded for the apparent covering up of the Bohai disaster62a.

It was mentioned previously that staff of the Tianjin Daily knew about the serious accident shortly after it occurred but did not proceed to report it publicly. At the Workers' Daily office journalists also waited for "leading organs" to "nod their heads and give permission".63 The thinking dominant at the time in the newspaper office was that public reporting of the affair would meet serious resistance and the "legal resolution of the accident was probably (going to be) difficult". Staff felt the reporting might begin well but have to "end badly" so the newspaper "remained passive". The Workers' Daily journalists were "criticized" in early June by a "leading comrade of the Central committee" for not reporting the incident. They wrote that this criticism was "joyfully received" and it "increased (our) courage to launch criticism (of the affair) in the newspaper"64.

It was not until the second half of July, however, that the first report was published. The fact that the Party was publicly reporting the oil-rig capsize was much more significant than the actual report of the accident and its immediate causes. It appears that journalists had to what for Deng Xiaoping, as the most powerful political leader, to want to use such an incident in a major political move - the removal of a senior leader. The orchestration of public reporting from July onwards was designed apparently to focus people's minds on a number of matters encapsulated in the

62a Short, Philip, op. cit., 428.
63 XWZX No. 10 1980, 11. By the small group from the Worker' Daily office who reported the Bohai No. 2 incident.
64 XWZX No. 10 1980, 11.
following slogans - the economic system, bureaucratism, remnants of feudalist thinking, reform of the cadre system and basic problems in the leadership system of the Party and the State.

Forty-one distinctly separate items were published during the intensive six weeks' coverage of the Bohai No 2 Incident in the Peoples' Daily in forms including xiaoxi (news items), shuping (reviews), tongxun (news reports), diaocha (investigations), ceji (sidelights), shelun (editorials), pinglun (commentaries), jinritan (speaking today), (sketches and notes) bitan, laixin (letters), wenzhang (essays), and manhua (cartoons). Reports were carried in other major newspapers as well. The stories were carried by at least six major newspapers and probably reported again in lesser papers to distribute the news and the attendant political messages around the nation.

In the Worker's Daily office, journalists were very keen to 'speak for the people' by reporting the Bohai incident promptly in the pages of the public newspaper. They raised the public reporting with the relevant organs of Party leadership but certain misgivings were on their minds. If so serious an incident were reported before it had been dealt with the populace might be "disheartened" and "stability and unity" disrupted. The old fear of a bad public image at home and abroad prevailed. Also, because the problem was caused by the Ocean Oil Exploration Bureau and had repercussions for high Party leaders the reporting was held up by political resistance.

Eventually a leader from the Central Committee "criticized" the Worker Daily office staff for not "speaking out for the people" thus giving them the all-clear to report the matter in the pages of the newspaper. After that indication of political support, the Oil Ministry's leadership was exposed for a crime described as "commanding" the workers and "the Four
Modernizations with them" into the sea. In other words they were accused of something akin to criminal negligence, for sending workers out in unsafe conditions.

The first report, however, did not appear until eight months after the event had occurred. Some journalists had not wanted to delay the reporting of the disastrous Bohai No 2 incident for so long, but could not convince the leadership to allow publication earlier. The Workers' Daily staff had intended to report the matter two and a half months earlier than they eventually did. Even this would have meant only telling the public five and a half months after the disaster had occurred.

THE NEED FOR SWIFTER PUBLIC REPORTING

Some writers in the major professional journal, News Front made it obvious that they felt journalists should be given more power to make decisions about publication of news. One writer lobbied for the Party leadership to place more trust in the journalists and editors. Journalists wanted more freedom to influence politics through public reporting. Zhang felt the leaders should have let the news office staffs report the Bohai incident promptly, and said the eight months' delay showed how much reform of the news industry (and of course lifting of Party restrictions over it) was needed. He wrote that while journalists were not allowed to print

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65 XWZX No. 10 1980, 11.
67 Workers' Daily "Bohai No. 2" Incident Reporting Group, "Must Have The Courage To Speak Truthfully To The Masses" in XWZX, No. 10, 1980, 10-12.
68 ibid.
prompt reports they could not adequately "serve the Four Modernizations". He felt that public news should contribute to clearing up the aftermath of a disaster, and not merely report the final Party decisions made after bureaucratic and political delays. News became history when reporting of such events was not allowed in a more timely fashion.

CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM REQUIRED

When faced with problematic issues or personalities journalists become involved in critical and exposure reporting - to be made to the leadership and, in appropriate versions, to the public. Selective public criticism generally was designed to reinforce the positive messages in the newspapers and thus maintain confidence in the Party. The critical items published were restricted for the purpose of upholding "correct" things, thus saving them from "damage" and "contamination". All criticism publicly voiced had to be expressed in a way designed not to disturb or be disruptive.

Critical reports were aimed at the "reformation of work", and at promotion and consolidation of state-building. Criticism was required to be principled and constructive. It was not to be used to oppose the "peoples' democratic system" and common guiding principles or to destroy discipline or the leadership, or to "strike at the faith and worth of the renmin quzhong (masses of the people) as they move forward". Destructive criticism, that which created a pessimistic or hopeless mood, or "disorganized and divided state of affairs" was not to be published. Before publishing critical material it was considered for its political suitability: was

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70 Lan Hongwen, Xinwen Caifangxue, Chinese Peoples' University Publishing House, Beijing, 1984, 132.
public criticism going to provide more benefit to the "people" than to their enemies?

The major exposure stories in the public press in 1980 were printed to let the people see that the Party showed no mercy with the poor "styles of work" of some of its cadres. By reading such stories, the public were supposed to see that under the leadership of the Party there was hope in the present and future of their society. Such critical reporting was intended to "quench the thirst of the audience", make them feel the Party and government did not shield their shortcomings, were not irresolute in solving problems, and were fair in meting out rewards and punishments.

It was laid down that certain conduct of Chinese citizens and cadres might be publicly criticized. Journalists should uphold the general political principle that praise [of the government and Party] was to be the primary content of the newspapers. They were also required to be "brave enough" to criticize the following: words and deeds which ran counter to the Party line, Party general principles and policies; behaviour which violates the (State) Laws and the (Party) Discipline; and questions of such things as incorrect "styles". Negative phenomena or undesirable types of behaviour were to be ascribed to the poisoning of peoples' minds by discredited former leaderships. The types of behaviour of cadres which were to be criticized in

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71 XWZX, No. 6, 1979, 11.


73 ibid.

74 fangzhen

75 Lan Hongwen, op. cit., 132.
1979 were those ways of thinking and "styles of work" which were seen as corrupted\textsuperscript{76}. In the early period after 1978, the poisonous influences were attributed to deposed leaders Lin Biao and the "Gang of Four", trying to remove blame far from Deng Xiaoping and the leaders currently in charge of the Party and nation. Of course, publication always depended on political support each time, for each separate issue. Into the late 1980s, quotas of internal news reports were still levied on Xinhua News Agency staff, and it is likely that there will always be internal debate and political negotiation about publication of major or sensitive news.

The practice of public "criticism and self-criticism" by Party cadres in the newspapers\textsuperscript{77} was designed generally to show two things. The first was that the masses, through their representatives and guardians, were able to point out 'shortcomings and errors' in the Party's work of governing them. The second was the "education" of Party members by making some cadres from the Party committees publicly comment on those selected shortcomings and errors. The first major proclamation of criticism in the newspapers of the PRC was a 1950 \textit{Jueding} Decision which was republished in \textit{News Front} in 1979\textsuperscript{78}. A 1954 \textit{Jueyi} Resolution of the Central Committee on reformation of newspaper work "again" required each level of Party committee to "use" the newspapers to develop criticism and self-criticism\textsuperscript{79}.

\textsuperscript{76} \textit{XWZX}, No. 3, 1979, 3-4. list of ten.

\textsuperscript{77} The practice of public "criticism" in the newspapers was dealt with by Leonard L. Chu in his paper, \textit{Press Criticism and Self-Criticism in Communist China - An Analysis of Its Ideology, Structure and Operation}, which was presented to the International Communication Division, Association for Education in Journalism, Ohio, July 25-28, 1982, 22 pages.

\textsuperscript{78} see \textit{XWZX}, No. 6, 1979.

\textsuperscript{79} \textit{Xinwen Zhanxian}, No. 3, 1979, 3.
Newspaper criticism in the early PRC portrayed 'shortcomings and errors' and addressed the "arrogant mood easily engendered in those with positions of power"\footnote{ibid.}. How far such criticism went was determined, of course, by decisions of leading Party personnel and their newspaper staffs. By constructive processes of criticism cadres could be "educated and trained" and their work "reformed and expedited"\footnote{ibid.}.

While criticizing, the newspaper staff had to keep in mind that they were protectors or defenders of "unity", both within the Party and among the people, and guardians of the Party's line, and the "discipline" required by the Party and the State\footnote{ibid.}. These values have cropped up repeatedly in the brief history of the PRC. They limited and defined the extent of public criticism broadly allowed the newspaper professionals by Party leaders. If the leaders felt at any time that those basic values had been endangered by the public press, journalists and chief editors would be punished.

Of course, what seemed to be transgressions of these values at a particular time might appear in the newspapers when different leaders were jockeying for positions of power and control. Restrictions on public newspaper criticism return to within the boundaries of what was perceived as a 'stable' state of authority and government. Public criticism was limited to what political leaders somewhere would support. If high political leaders were interested in certain critical material being published it might well be published.

\footnote{ibid.}
Public newspaper criticism and exposure of the machinery of government and of certain people within the system were permitted, but always in a way designed to present the top leadership and the majority of the Party members in a good light and as having the peoples' interests at heart. As Gan Xifen pointed out, criticism in the newspapers was only one form of criticism available to the leadership and journalists could not "let all critical [news] appear publicly in the newspaper pages"\(^{83}\). Investigation and reporting of maladministration and injustice must not present the people and the state as adversaries\(^{84}\). No antagonism was allowed, through journalistic championing of peoples' interests, toward the government or Party as a whole. Anger and criticism had to be directed at specific cases and individuals as aberrations, although general trends seeping into the society might be criticized to show the Party's awareness of them.

Liu Binyan, a Party member and Peoples' Daily reporter from 1979, attempted and achieved great political influence through the public newspaper. He was eventually removed. As an investigative journalist, active and influential, Liu's unearthing of news and public reporting went too far for the Party leadership's general comfort. He gained a high personal profile and spoke out so critically that in January 1987 he was expelled from the Party again and fired from the Peoples' Daily office. The public criticism of him, after his Party mentor Hu Yaobang fell from favour, illustrates the limits beyond which journalists critical reporting could not go.

\(^{83}\) Gan Xifen, Xinwen Lilun Jichu, 152. Internal criticism channels are also available to the leadership.

\(^{84}\) renmin didui zhengfu
Liu was very critical of the Party itself, thinking many members were corrupt and degenerate. He felt that the peoples' interests, contrary to the myths and ideals of the Party, were very far removed from those of the Party. He upset a lot of Party leaders in the districts from which he reported cases of grave inefficiency and corruption.

Many of the accusations made against him publicly when he was expelled in 1987 stemmed from his investigative reporting as early as 1979. He finally committed an unpardonable sin - he achieved a high personal profile and criticized the use of key slogans used by the Party. He became too independent and powerful for political leaders to tolerate. The accusations levelled against him in newspapers and broadcasts early in 1979 (Peoples' Daily, Heilongjiang Daily, Shaanxi Daily, to name a few) illustrate the lines which an influential Chinese journalist crosses at his future peril. Liu Binyan went further than the rules and regulations which define the journalist's limited role and encroached on political authority and influence which Party leaders considered their provence.

Some of the criticisms of him follow. Liu Binyan publicly discussed the "Four Basic Principles" and criticized the use of them as "out-dated, rigid and dogmatic" leading China to calamities. As pointed out by his accusers, these were prescribed in the State and Party Constitution. He was accused also of acting 'overtly or covertly for the purpose of shaking off local Party organizations' thus not "showing respect" or consideration of their "proper" opinions. He was accused of causing "the seriously negative consequence of disorder", his reportage of "breaking up the unity of the masses" and of

85 Liu Binyan, Difficult Takeoff, Hunan Peoples' Publishing House, Changsha, 1982. A selection of his reportage. In some articles he suggested that the perpetrators of crimes or errors continued to go unpunished and to wield great influence.
"sowing discord between the Party and the masses". He had "engaged in exposing what he was pleased to call the degeneration of the Chinese Communist Party". These judgments of the consequences of his reporting could have been interpreted as counter-revolutionary and criminal, as examination of the Party and government regulations earlier in this chapter showed.

PARTY CADRE OBSTRUCTION AND RETALIATION

In practice, critical news which journalists thought it important to report often did not appear in the newspapers because Party leaders refused to let it be published. One example of this was seen in chapter two, in the case of the Yakou coal-mine reports, when the second report was never published. Good investigative journalists, because of the highly political nature of their work, had to overcome obstructions placed in their way. Party cadres tried to obscure their own mistakes and, in more serious instances, crimes. The types of active obstruction encountered by journalists, according to Liu Binyan, were similar to those which hindered investigative Party cadres sent from a higher level. Lower level authorities attempted to cover up a "problem" by presenting a false state of affairs to the investigators. They sought to sway the journalists toward favourable reporting by offering gifts which should be construed as bribes. Some resorted to attacking the interviewers. Attacks against journalists might discredit them in the eyes of the next higher level of Party authority. Charges of, amongst others, "rumour-mongering amongst the masses" might be brought formally to the Party committee under whose leadership the journalist's newspaper operates. Anonymous letters were also be sent to the committee\(^{86}\).

\(^{86}\) ibid., 5-6.
It seems that in some cases the submission of internal reports protected the journalist to some extent. Reporters had to report to Party authorities on the matters which they investigated, especially if there was insufficient evidence that the problem had been resolved. Lan Hongwen wrote that journalists had a responsibility to "reflect" unresolved matters to the next highest level of Party committee. The Party leaders could then decide whether or not to send out investigators to look into the matter. In one case a Shanxi Daily journalist went out on an assignment to investigate a problem within one of Shanxi Province's counties. During the course of his assignment he reported to the Standing Committee of the Yangcheng County, which was correct procedure. It responded by formally recognizing that their method of employing people had run counter to the established policy. Journalist Wang Xianbin then advised the officials that he would neither write an internal report nor publish the "problem" in the newspaper, until the committee had taken time to solve or "correct" it. Some months later the situation had not changed and people affected by it felt that journalists had been bought off by the county cadres. Readers of Wang's subsequent letter written to the Peoples' Daily might have felt that he could have saved himself some agony if he had made his internal report. As Gan Xifen remarked in 1982: "... the resistance to newspaper criticism encountered today is great...some people are totally opposed to public criticism."
Liu Binyan's investigative reporting and writing exposed too many senior Party officials who searched for ways to retaliate. A very critical journalist always met with obstruction. The following objections raised by Party leaders and others to publication of critical reports were mentioned in 1980 by some journalists in News Front: they would reduce popular trust in the Party and government; discredit socialism and the system of government; dampen the peoples' confidence; interfere in daily business; and provide opportunities to enemies. The journalists had strong counters to these objections, as mentioned earlier. Yet the real objections of those criticized or exposed were the undermining of their authority and the uncovering of their own errors and crimes. Party officials repeatedly refused to allow journalists enough freedom from and authority above lower-level Party committee members involved in the investigations. Mao and Shi listed a string of onerous requirements made of journalists which amounted to their need to be exceptionally careful and beyond reproach. They also remarked that journalists must have a "high degree of awareness of policy", but that they should be protected from obstruction and retaliation. Mao and Shi wrote that there should be legal protection for journalists and punishment of those who obstructed them. No law eventuated in 1980 or 1981 but the Central committee document Number 7 effectively told the journalists that they could not have a great deal of independent authority.

News offices in China were supervised by the Party through several means. Journalists were bound to follow the decisions of Party leaders on what should be covered and how, even when their professional opinion

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91 Zhang Nan, op. cit., Mao and Shi, op. cit.
92 Indeed later in the 1980s journalists and editors were discussing a Press Law but by 1989 there still had not been any promulgated.
indicated that an event should be swiftly reported as public news. In 1980 it was apparent from some of the articles written by Chinese journalists in their national professional magazine that independent thinking about news publication did exist. Yet critical reporting was bound by certain political requirements and by the Party leaders' attitude that no individual journalist be allowed to have too much personal influence on the public.
CHAPTER SIX: BEYOND THE NEWS OFFICES

The system of organized journalism was in large part designed to control the news and other messages which reached the majority of the Chinese public. Reactions of that public to the news in newspapers is very difficult to ascertain. During the period from December 1978 to 1982 little material was produced about the newspaper reading public. A survey conducted of a relatively broad audience in Beijing is the only available evidence. If it correctly reflected the attitude of some citizens, alternate news circulation was often relied on to supplement inadequate or unbelievable coverage in the press. Alternative written news was available for a period from late 1978, through the efforts of young people who began posting big character posters at "Democracy Walls" in Beijing and other cities. The samizdat publications that accompanied the posters were no longer being published by the end of 1980, and at least one author had been charged with the crime of counter-revolution. The alteration of an article in the State Constitution between versions, in 1980, demonstrated the authorities' attitude that the only acceptable independent channel of news dissemination was passing news directly into Party and government organs. The one alternate means of news circulation which survived in spite of government actions was the highly developed oral communication of news.

ASSESSMENT OF OFFICIAL PUBLIC NEWS

Various methods were employed by the news offices and the government periodically in China to determine public reaction to their news and propaganda efforts. Investigations of readers' attitudes in China have in the past been undertaken usually by individual news organizations, by
'distinct visit'\(^1\) and small-scale symposia.\(^2\) In 1985, six methods of investigation were described: individual talks; invitation of 'representative' people to a symposium; consultation by telephone or letter - usually to know opinions immediately on an important news item; limited survey - respondents often being the 'active elements'; editors' and journalists' visit to newspaper-reading bulletin boards and newsstands to learn readers' opinions; and the newspaper and programme criticism groups or officers established by the media organization for the obtaining of masses' opinions. Individual organizations also learned something of readers' attitudes from readers' letters and visits, and through the newspapers' networks of 'correspondents'. Studies of this information have not been published.

Prior to 1982, how believable the 'masses' or general reading public found the professionally prepared news in the newspapers could be gauged only from very limited and scattered pieces of information. In 1982, however, the newly introduced method of computer-based random sampling was tried. Information on the preferences of the public in Beijing became available through this, the first public opinion poll in PRC history to address content of the newspapers (and broadcasts).\(^3\) The most fully documented source available to us for public reception of news between 1978 and 1982 is

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1. gebie tanhua
3. BSJ Newsletter, 1. An Gang claimed it as 'the first in the history of China's journalism to apply scientific method, to adopt modern statistical means to carry out a comprehensive survey of and research into the readers, listeners and viewers in one district'. See the report produced by researchers at Stanford University - Rogers, Everett M., Zhao Xiaoyan, Pan Zhongdan and Milton Chen, "The Beijing Audience Study" in Communication Research, Vol. 12, No. 2, April 1985, 179-208. An English translation of the survey reports with accompanying general comment - Womack, Brantly, and Li Shu, eds.,"Media and the Chinese Public: a Survey of the Beijing Media Audience", A special issue of Chinese Sociology and Anthropology, M.E. Sharpe, Inc., Vol. 18, Nos. 3-4, Spring-Summer 1986.
contained in a Report of this survey.

The representativeness of an audience, as demonstrated in surveys or opinion polls, offers information on readers' attitudes as a whole so that generalizations can be made about the processes underlying attitude formation among the majority of the "normal" or "ordinary" citizens in the society. These processes and their results are important and valuable for determining norms in the society. They show what exists for the majority of citizens rather than the extremes of behaviour or the habits and influence of those persons disaffected with the whole political system. Careful piecing together of information from such surveys could uncover some of the sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, approval and criticism, and show something of what shapes generally held opinion and why.

THE 1982 BEIJING AUDIENCE SURVEY

Material obtained from the survey was presented in the Report made by the Beijing Society of Journalism, in March 1983, in a special edition of its Newsletter (hereinafter BSJ Newsletter), and later published in the Chinese Journalism Yearbook 1983. It appeared in print again in 1985, accompanied by several more articles on the survey and further articles about reader research, in a book published by the Worker's Daily Publishing House. The survey was of a large computerized sample based on the random sampling method. Over 2,300 people in Beijing were surveyed between June and

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5 Mickiewicz, op. cit., 1-16

6 One of a class of restricted or neibu publications, intended for news media staff circles in China.
August of 1982.\(^7\) It was organized by the Beijing Society of Journalism in cooperation with the Institute of Journalism Research, the *Peoples' Daily*, the *Worker's Daily* and *China Youth* newspaper offices\(^8\). The Report provided information showing what proportion of the population read the newspapers and details of those who did not. It showed which from amongst a range of types of newspaper were read and whether people enjoyed reading them. Some further data gave an indication of readers' attitudes to the news content in the papers and of whether the readers believed it.

The survey used one standard printed questionnaire divided into four sections.\(^9\) The first section for general readers, listeners and viewers asked: sex, age, educational level, occupation, residence (city or countryside) of the respondent; and details about time spent on the three different media, favourite programmes and favourite types of newspaper reports. Information from the survey showed what proportion of the population read the newspapers and details of those who did not, which newspapers were read and whether they were enjoyed. Further data gave some indication of readers' attitudes to the news content in the papers and of whether the readers believed what they read. The Beijing audience was likely to be a more informed and sophisticated group of Chinese citizens than most outside

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\(^7\) Ai Feng's speech 'Relationship Between the Various Branches of the Media in China' in Seminar booklet, 4. The precise figure he quoted was 2,325 - this figure actually refers to the number of respondents to one particular question within the questionnaire. Ai Feng was a reporter from the *Peoples' Daily* office.

\(^8\) *BSJ Newsletter*, 3. The Beijing Broadcasting Institute, the Beijing Social Sciences Research Institute and the 1981 journalism graduate students of the Journalism Department in the Postgraduate Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences also participated in conducting the survey.

\(^9\) A copy of this was provided to the author at the Institute of Journalism Research in October 1983. It has been republished since in *XWNI* 1983.
the major cities, so the survey was representative possibly of big city citizens but not of the majority of rural Chinese\textsuperscript{10}.

**COMPARISONS OF AVAILABLE NEWSPAPERS.**

Citizens were asked which newspapers out of sixteen choices they preferred to read\textsuperscript{11}. They could select a number of favoured or read newspapers from a choice of sixteen. The two local daily papers available in Beijing had the highest percentages of readers. 72.4\% replied that they read the *Beijing Evening News* and 70.8\% the *Beijing Daily*\textsuperscript{12}. Three national papers directed at a broad audience were next: *People's Daily* 47.6\%, *Reference News* 39.6\% and *China Youth* 36.2\%\textsuperscript{13}. High interest in the local papers indicated concern for affairs closer to home which Beijing citizens shared with citizens of many other cities in the world. Even though Beijing is the capital and political centre of the nation, local papers were more widely read than national, implying a certain parochialism of the Beijing audience.

People were also asked "Which paper do you enjoy most?" The

\textsuperscript{10} Later survey: large-scale computerized sample in Zhejiang Province in October of 1983. see 77. see also the Workers' Daily publication.

\textsuperscript{11} *BSJ Newsletter*, 26. 1966 people, 81\% of the total 2423 questionnaire respondents, answered questions about their newspaper preferences. 18.9\% of total survey respondents, replied that they did not read newspapers. Amongst these were the 4.9\% percent classed as 'illiterate'. The following possible reasons were offered as options for non-reading: low educational level (34.1\% per cent); unaccustomed to newspaper reading (14.9\% per cent); no time (27.3 per cent); income too low to subscribe (8.5 per cent); unable to subscribe or once subscribed to, the newspaper(s) did not arrive, so subscription was cancelled (2.7 per cent); in too poor health to read (2.9 per cent); watch television and/or listen to the radio instead of reading newspapers (9.5 per cent). *BSJ Newsletter*, 5-7.

\textsuperscript{12} 1,423 people (72.4\% percent of readers) replied that they read the *Beijing Evening News* and 1391 (70.8\% percent) the *Beijing Daily*.

\textsuperscript{13} *People's Daily* 936 (47.6\% percent of readers), *Reference News* 779 (39.6\% percent), and *China Youth* 711 (36.2\% percent). Figures and percentages from *BSJ Newsletter*, 26.
Beijing Evening News was selected as the most popular. It was followed by Weekly Digest, China Youth, Wenhui Daily, and Sports News. After these, the Beijing Daily, People's Daily, and Reference News were selected by considerably fewer respondents.

According to the survey results, Beijing Evening News proved to be both the most widely read and the most enjoyed newspaper. It was thus a popular and influential news medium because its contents probably reached a larger percentage of the Beijing population than that of other papers. The Chinese Journalism Yearbook 1982 mentioned that the major portion of the Beijing circulation of this paper was by private subscription. Beijing Evening News did not generally cover weighty political issues in detail but reported items of social and general interest to the city's population. An evening newspaper in China, as Song Zhihui has explained in his "On News Writing", was intended officially to have a different purpose from a daily, with "...a distinctive flavour to enrich peoples' lives after-hours, ...mass character, knowledge, flavour, social life for the masses under the leadership of the Party, to supplement the daily paper, enrich the mind, broaden the outlook, increase knowledge." Not a serious political news channel but

14 40.1 percent out of the 1624 readers (82.6 percent of total readers) who replied, chose the Beijing Evening News.

15 sixteen-page weekly digest of news from the major papers, XWNI 1982, 211

16 a Shanghai published paper intended for the intelligentsia nationwide, XWNI 82, 521

17 The next highest popularity percentages were for: the Weekly Digest 35.4 percent; China Youth 29.8 percent; Wenhui Daily 26.9 percent; Sports News 25.0 percent.

18 Beijing Daily 20.6 percent; People's Daily 17.0 percent; and the semi-public selection of foreign news reports Reference News 16.8 percent. Figures and percentages from BSJ Newsletter, 31.

19 XWNI 1982, 282.

vetted lighter reading material for relaxation.

**Beijing Daily, People's Daily, and Reference News** appear in contrast to have been less enjoyed but widely read for the general requirements of work or of keeping track of political expectations. These newspapers, often subscribed to by work units, may have been read by so many respondents simply because these were available in the workplace or were required reading by bosses and Party officials attached to the workplace. It is important also to remember that in China, under Party rule, newspaper reading and radio listening had long been regarded patriotic duties and were sometimes compulsory.

**SOURCES OF NEWS**

Question five of the general section of the survey asked "What is your major channel for understanding important national affairs?" 38.7% declared it to be newspaper reading and 35% radio broadcasts. 19.4% primarily watched television for news and 4.9% admitted to relying on listening to other people. Only 0.8% said they read neican (internal reference) materials.

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21 Listening to the radio was considered a patriotic duty according to CNA 979, Nov. 8, 1974, 7.

22 Reading of the newspapers was compulsory and went on in the factories and villages in group reading sessions according to CNA 631, Oct. 7, 1966, 7.

23 2325 people replied, as follows: reading 'internal reference' materials 0.8 percent.

24 In the BSJ Newsletter (page 1) it was noted that some respondents mistakenly took Cankao Xiaoxi (Reference News) to be part of the 'internal reference' materials. This hardly seems an important note to include since, according to the Journalism Yearbook 1982, Reference News was a publication to report world news and news from Hong Kong and Taiwan (XWNI 1982, 314). It might have been more relevant to point out that some people who were not state cadres, or in some position with official access to such materials, might not feel it prudent to admit to reading 'internal reference' materials. On the other hand, the intended readers of the report might be expected to be aware of this matter.
Another question on news content was addressed only to readers of the People's Daily: "Do you prefer to read the international news in Reference News or in this newspaper?" Of the 708 readers, 477 chose Reference News and only 231 the People's Daily.25 The People's Daily was a propaganda organ representing the highest level of the Party, and people probably expected it to take certain stances on international issues, whereas Reference News printed reports from sources outside China and was offered as information and opinions for readers to consult as reference. Obviously then, news other than that produced by Chinese journalists and editors for the public was sought after and highly regarded. Such numbers did not indicate a high level of confidence in the public news produced by Chinese journalists.

CONFIDENCE IN OFFICIAL PUBLIC NEWS

Confidence in the reliability of news in the newspapers was also examined by the survey organisers. They asked the Beijing public: "What is your opinion of the newspapers currently? - believable, basically believable, not very believable, unbelievable or not sure?" followed by a question asking people to categorize their lack of complete confidence under a number of headings.

1837 of the 1966 readers responded as follows: "believable" 24.2%, "basically believable" 55%, "not very believable" 3.2%, "unbelievable" 0.4%, and 16.9% were "not sure". Most readers therefore had some confidence in newspaper news. Only 24.2% claimed full confidence, and the majority had reservations about some of the newspaper's contents.

25 BSJ Newsletter, 38.
An English language New China News Agency (NCNA) report of the poll, published mainly for foreign consumption, presented the results as 'Chinese newspapers are completely or basically believable, 79.2 percent of respondents believe' calling the percentage for 'believable' as 'completely believable'. Most readers, therefore could be expected to have had some confidence in newspaper news. Another interpretation of these results would indicate that only 24.2 percent had full confidence in the papers and 58.9 percent regard the news therein with some scepticism.

That 16.9 percent of respondents replied 'not sure' was not reported by NCNA. The 'not sure' respondents probably included a number of people who did not wish to express their true opinions, people who were unable to judge through lack of experience or lack of alternative sources of news, and people who rarely read the newspapers. Mickiewicz stated that the "no-answer response" varied in frequency in surveys and might occur from "lack of information about the subject, lapse of memory, or deliberate refusal to respond because of protest or lack of trust". Examination of other details of this 16.9 percent might have proved quite revealing. That only 3.6 percent of respondents replied 'not very believable' or 'unbelievable' might point to a general fear of stating negative opinions to the investigators rather than to most people generally believing their newspapers.

Sceptical readers must have other sources of experience and news by which they may judge the newspaper news. The nearly three quarters of respondents who did not fully accept the veracity of the newspapers' contents probably had access to the alternate news sources. That they were
accustomed to use channels other than the newspapers for learning information and news and whatever else concerned them was demonstrated by the response to another question.

A little over half of admitted newspaper readers answered the question asking why newspaper news could not be 100% reliable. Of these, 44.3% marked "Some of the content does not tally with real life", 43.7% "Some reports are biased, the contents being all positive or all negative", and 29.2% "Sometimes unpleasant information is held back and only the good news is reported". 27% also marked "Some reports are inconsistent with the facts", 17% selected "more than one of the above" in addition to other respondents who marked several.

These results implied that in 1982, half of the readers in Beijing could discriminate between biased news and accurate reporting. That nearly three quarters of the survey respondents had not regarded newspapers as totally reliable also implied they must have had access to alternate sources of news enabling them to be skeptical.

Newspapers in China were considered to be mouthpieces of the Party, so these responses implied that some Beijing residents had little confidence in the Party's word, both on the propagation of its theoretical or ideological issues and on the practical measures it was taking in Chinese economic, political and social life. One man, questioned by a foreign journalist in Beijing at the end of 1978, criticized the lack of a newspaper that spoke for the people outside the Party. He said they would "like a newspaper that expresses the thoughts and interests of the people themselves. We do not have such a thing. The favourite newspaper of the people at the moment is

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28 BSJ Newsletter, 34. Fifty percent was 1044 people
the Reference News, which prints translations of foreign news agencies, but it tells us only what foreigners think of China - it is not our newspaper and does not express our views. This is only one of many deficiencies in our system which must be corrected". He and the people might have been satisfied by 1982, with the additional reading matter of evening newspapers available to them. It seems unlikely since the coverage of subject matter in the Reference News and in the evening papers was widely variant.

POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE NEWSPAPER NEWS

Another question asked, 'What do you think are the major facets of not completely believable content?' and received a 25.9 percent 'not sure' response. The choices offered allowed respondents the opportunity to comment on Chinese politics and the workings of the government, albeit under the guise of criticizing newspaper workers or cadres for not doing their jobs properly. The percentages of respondents who chose the following categories were:

- Marxism-Leninism, propaganda of Mao Zedong Thought, propaganda of policies 12.9 percent

- that socialism is good and capitalism is rotten 17.1 percent

- the improvement in Party style and the Party's service to the people 19.9 percent

29 John Fraser quoted his conversation with "a middle-aged man who must have been an official of some sort, to judge by the better cut and cloth of his coat and the Japanese digital watch on his wrist". He asked "So you do not believe everything that is written in the People's Daily then?" and the man replied: "It is not a question of believing...The Chinese people know that the People's Daily represents the direct thinking of the Party. When they read it, they are looking for news of the Party and the direction in which the Party wants to lead the country. We are very happy to have this information. But we would also like...". In John Fraser, The Chinese - Portrait of a People, 1980/82, 247-8.
- reflection of the voices and demands of the masses of the people 30.1 percent

- successes achieved in production and construction, the raising of people's living standards 28.4 percent

- criticism of dishonest ways, crackdown on economic crime 16.1 percent

- praise of advanced characters, advocacy of new morality and new customs 16.2 percent

Each of these alternatives was chosen by a fair proportion of respondents. The greatest discontent by respondent numbers was with the "reflections of masses' demands" and "successes achieved in improving living standards". These were perhaps the issues closest to all respondents whatever their educational level or social status. Newspaper coverage of the more sensitive political issues, however, also received some percentage of respondent criticism. 14.4 percent indicated 'several of the above' and 25.9 percent were 'not sure'.

One restriction on the truthfulness and completeness of answers to the questionnaire was probably the lack of anonymity guaranteed to respondents. The questionnaire form included blanks for respondents to fill in their names, units and nationalities next to those for the name of the particular investigator, date of investigation, and number of the questionnaire. There was no indication that the provision of these details was optional and Chinese citizens could not assume that the researchers would not reveal their names to authorities. Also, after the interviewing was

30 BSJ Newsletter, 34.
finished, a spot check was made of ten percent of 295 basic level work units from which respondents were selected. It was found that five of the units (that is, nearly 17 percent) had not strictly followed the random sampling principle, and had to re-do their investigation. The published results of this poll did not include enough figures for reasonable independent analysis of the results to be made. Percentages alone are inadequate and can be misleading, as appears in several instances for the questions addressed below. Another deficiency in the reporting of the survey was the lack of breakdown for respondents' occupations, sex and age-groups presented for each specific question. In the absence of better material the Report must be examined for what light it does shed on attitudes of the masses to the mass media.

Those circulation figures available for these papers unfortunately do not help much to determine reader interest since they do not all specify how many copies went specifically to Beijing readers. Some newspapers were likely to have been shared amongst readers in homes and workplaces as well as individually. In addition to which, newspapers were spread out in some places on bulletin boards for as many people to read as chose to.

Newspapers and broadcasting stations in the People's Republic of China had been directly run or overseen by the Party for over three decades by this time, and paying attention to the news and propaganda continue to be


part of the political life of a citizen. It could be reasonably assumed that people still consulted newspapers in order to work out how to act - to do their jobs well and not make too many mistakes.

This large-scale poll used a uniform questionnaire to amass statistical data reflecting the interests, needs and attitudes of Beijing residents, combined with the older methods and including 'examination of documents'. During the investigation, via 'distinct discussion' and symposium, 1172 opinions and suggestions were collected from Beijing residents, on the three media. Li Changqun, probably referring to responses made to requests for further comments at the ends of the three sections specifically for the People's Daily, the Workers' Daily and China Youth, remarked that: "The results of the investigation also revealed that not all of readers' needs could be satisfied, nor should they be. Some readers raised certain impractical demands that reflected a limited, transient or minority interest, including unhealthy or incorrect things." The contents of the further comments were not published in the BSJ Newsletter.

If the raw data collected by the researchers showed a real lack of confidence in the Party, relevant details may have been passed on to special sections of the participating organizations, and perhaps even to the Public Security Bureau for further investigation. The BSJ Newsletter would not be the appropriate publication, according to the graded restrictions on distribution of news and information, for presenting such sensitive details

33 News Front, No.9, 1983, 8
34 BSJ Newsletter, 5
35 Li Changqun "Improving the Readability of the Newspapers", in News Front, No.2, 1983, 22. Li was an editor of the Peoples' Daily and one of the first news-people to go through the postgraduate journalism course set up under the Academy of Social Sciences in 1978
and airing such possibilities. The use of opinion polls, if improved, could continue to provide interesting information on the public's reception of mass media news and information. At any particular period the limitations on mass media news reception would thus be revealed.

Circulation of news through the mass media was limited by the readers', listeners' and viewers' reception of it. Acceptance of news transmitted through the official media depended upon several factors. One of these was whether people had learned of conflicting news through other channels. False or incorrect news contributed to a lack of confidence in the newspapers. There are indications that a great deal of important news circulated in China outside the professional system.

INDEPENDENT CIRCULATION OF PRINTED NEWS

News circulation outside the official system was very influential but it is difficult to pinpoint. Official information channels, while not referred to as news media, carried news to the public accompanied by directives and other messages. These channels included: big and small character posters or wall newspapers, internal transmission of documents, and various forms of reports. Such news is impossible to document.

Alternate independent news mass media have been generally non-existent. The government exercised a monopoly over economic means of production and mass distribution of printed news materials. During a period from late 1978 and into 1979 wall-posters were put up unofficially and some mimeographed publications flourished. The publications have been described, analysed and translated by several authors36. The overwhelming

36 See footnote 22, Chapter 1.
concern of the Party for the political implications of news circulation extended to restricting the use of facilities for mass circulation of news to selected professionals under the "leadership" of committees of the Party. A State Council document, No. 163, of 1980 tightened controls over publishing by banning assistance to unauthorized news publishers, by printing plants, banks, post offices and booksellers.37

THE PRIMARY DUTY OF EVERY CITIZEN

All individual choice in disseminating news and other messages was qualified by obedience to the Communist Party, and all freedoms or rights of citizens were qualified with responsibilities or duties38. Any citizen or group of citizens disseminating news needed to be aware of stipulations in the State Constitution. In the General Principles of the 1978 Constitution Article 2 laid down the inescapable political constraint on all citizens of China:

*The Communist Party of China is the core of leadership of the whole Chinese people. The working class exercises leadership over the state through its vanguard, the Communist Party of China. The guiding ideology of the People's Republic of China is Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought*39.

This was the major political and legal limitation on independent news

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37 Wang Guoliang and Yu Guoying, "Caiqu cuoshi zhizhi feifa chuban huodong" in Guangming Daily, 31/7/81, 5.

38 Note for example Article 32 of the 1982 draft of the State Constitution: "... The rights of citizens are inseparable from their duties...". The Chinese Constitution in BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, 29 April 1982, FE/7014/c1/1-21.

39 The published version quoted from here was The Constitution of the Peoples' Republic of China (Adopted on March 5, 1978 by the 5th N.P.C. of the PRC at its First Session), Foreign Languages Press, 1978, Beijing.
dissemination. Despite frequent and substantial revisions of the state Constitution since the unification of China under the Chinese Communist Party in 1949, this stipulation of obedience to Party authority has appeared in some prominent form in every version\textsuperscript{40}. The version promulgated in 1978 stipulated the responsibility placed upon citizens to "support" the Party. Article 56 reads:

\textit{Citizens must support the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, support the socialist system, safeguard the unification of the motherland and the unity of all nationalities (in our country), (and) abide by the Constitution and the laws}.\textsuperscript{41}

Interpreting these stipulations, no citizen would be allowed to report news if there was any question that the Party felt such news served to oppose it.

A characteristic of each PRC Constitution was its incorporation of current Party policy. When policies were changed it effectively meant the removal of previous Constitutional guarantees from the revised version. Such a custom represented a further limitation on news circulation. Written into the General Principles of the 1978 Constitution was the "Double Hundreds" policy which has been used as a political call for greater expression of opinions and broader information dissemination.

Article 14 read:

\textit{The state upholds the leading position of Marxism-Leninism-Mao

\textsuperscript{40} The March 1978 Draft had been preceeded by a 1975 Constitution and itself was replaced by a new Draft on the 27th of April 1982.

\textsuperscript{41} State Constitution, 1978.
Zedong Thought in all spheres of ideology and culture. All cultural undertakings must serve the workers, peasants and soldiers and serve socialism. The state applies the principle of "letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend" so as to promote the development of the arts and sciences and bring about a flourishing socialist culture.

It should be noted that blooming was limited by the requirement to apply the reigning ideology and that the principle of contending thought was meant to be "applied by the state" and not by individuals. Freedom and diversity were qualified and limited within the parameters imposed by the authorities.

THE "FOUR GREATS"

Under 'Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens' stipulation in the 1978 Constitution, two articles related to specific forms of news and opinion dissemination. Article 45 on the freedom of speech and publication read:

"Citizens enjoy freedoms of speech, the writing of letters, publishing, assembly, association, procession, demonstration, and to strike, (and) to utilize the right to "speak out freely, air their views fully, hold great debates and write big character posters"."43

Speaking out, airing views, holding debates and writing posters as described in that Article became known as the "four greats". These means of

\[\text{ibid.}\]
\[\text{Article 45.}\]
expression theoretically allowed broad dissemination of opinions, speculations and news. Political views were concerned only where dissemination of news influences formation of these. The article purported to offer a legal guarantee to citizens that they could use the listed means of dissemination of news and expression of opinion. In practice, they remained limited by duty to support the Party and the socialist system. The big character posters were particularly utilized in an independent fashion during late 1978 and in 1979⁴⁴.

The rights stipulated in the 1978 Constitution to "speak out freely, air their views fully, hold great debates and write big-character posters" had been written into the 1975 Constitution in Article 13 of its General Principles as:

**Speaking out freely, airing views fully, holding debates and writing big-character posters are new forms of carrying on socialist revolution created by the masses of the people. The state shall ensure to the masses the right to use these forms to create a political situation in which there are both centralism and democracy, both discipline and freedom, both unity of will and personal ease of mind and liveliness, and so help consolidate the leadership of the Communist Party of China over the state and consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat⁴⁵.**

Interestingly, the "four greats" were in 1975 intended explicitly to serve consolidation of Party power and of the state dictatorship. When these were transferred to the Rights Chapter of the 1978 version there notably

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⁴⁴ See chapter one, footnote 23.

were not included any explicit qualifications to the exercise of these rights. For news disseminators, especially independent ones, the omission may have led them to see these as rights to greater freedom of expression not necessarily directed towards the consolidation of the Party's political power.

On the 10th of September 1980 the 3rd meeting of the 5th National Peoples' Congress had passed a resolution to remove those words from the Constitution, and when the 1982 version was published the rights to use the four special means of expression had been deleted entirely. According to the 1978 Constitution in Article 22 the Congress was empowered to amend the Constitution, so from that date the sida (four greats) were no longer a constitutional right.

The Handbook of Elementary Legal Knowledge published in January 1981 justified the deletion. Its writers claimed that people had used the freedom of the sida to harm other citizens and jeopardize socialist democracy:

"...the 'sida (four greats') frequently became instruments for the destruction of socialist democracy, being used by a few people to spread rumours, as means of framing people, libel and personal attack. Moreover, those who posted big character posters and those (about whom) they were posted in reality were on an unequal footing (since the latter) were in

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46 Article 45 of the 1978 Constitution was amended so that the sida (four greats) were deleted. See Falu Changshi Shouce, Volume 2, Zhongguo Qingnian Chubanshe, Jan 1981, 86-87, for details and an explanation of the deletion.

47 The citizen was left with a number of rights and duties including "...Insults or slanders against citizens in any form are prohibited" (Article 37); "The citizens of the PRC have the obligation to safeguard

circumstances where they found it difficult to vindicate themselves or (themselves) with no means of defence".  

Those rights had been guaranteed to all citizens of the PRC and not restricted for the use of those who wished to attack. The attacked had the right to defend themselves by making speeches or writing posters refuting the rumours and libel, and even to challenge anonymous writers to declare themselves and engage in a debate to justify and prove their allegations.

The writers of the Handbook continued: "This form of the sida jeopardized the legitimate exercise of democratic rights by citizens, and did not aid the true development of socialist democracy...".

Although there might have been some truth in the claim that certain individuals were slandered through these media the real reason for removing the sida (four greats) was more likely that the Party leaders found some citizens using these means of news communication to challenge their authority. Yang Xiufeng, Deputy Chairman of the Commission on Legislative Affairs of the NPC Standing Committee commented: "The inclusion of the stipulation in black and white in the Constitution has provided an opportunity for a small number of bad people to take advantage of it from the legal angle. Hoisting the 'four freedoms' banner, some people with ulterior motives created incidents and launched an attack on the proletariat in a vain attempt to overthrow the leadership of the Communist Party...".

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49 Falu Changshi Shouce, ibid., 86-87.

50 ibid.

51 'NPC Standing Committee Discusses Deletion of the "Four Freedoms"', in SWB, 18 April 1980, FE/6398/BII, 1-3.
Yang was really pointing to the news freedoms exercised by people during the "Cultural Revolution" and by those who, along with Wei Jingsheng, exercised their constitutional rights in late 1978 and early 1979 to produce their own publications and write their own posters containing news and opinion. "...Some bad people used big-character posters precisely to divulge many very important Party and state secrets from the time of the great "Cultural Revolution" to that of the "Xidan Wall".\(^{52}\)

Some citizens with independent thinking had used these media to voice directly their views and independently disseminate certain news and information. The State, or rather the Party leadership, realized its authority was being challenged. The reaction of the leadership was to destroy the means open to the opposition. Instead of dealing with the opposition in other ways, the Party leadership cancelled Constitutional sanctions which restricted the rights of all citizens.

Ordinary citizens were thus deprived of some of their freedoms of news dissemination because the government could not tolerate independent expression of opinion and dissemination of news.

The *Nanfang Daily* added a further justification for removing the Constitutional rights to speak out freely, air their views fully and hold great debates and write big character posters. The writer asks readers to consider that before the advent of these means in 1956, "The people were bold enough to speak their mind out under all kinds of circumstances, people from different levels could hold discussions in an equal and democratic way and there was frequent criticism and struggle against bureaucratism in Party

\(^{52}\) ibid.
publications". The writer further remarked that "In the past couple of years (for example 1978 and 1979), there has not been much promotion of the 'four greats', but academic contending, artistic blooming and the launching of criticism and self-criticism in the newspapers have been carried out much better than in the 10 years' upheaval while we were promoting the 'four greats'. This might not be disputed by some citizens but the point to be made here was that during this "much better" period the 'four greats' were still included in the Constitution whether "promoted" or not. Yang had in this statement negated his own argument. If "promotion" had such power to influence the people then responsible use of those means could be promoted.

The Beijing Daily's Wu Daying defended the argument for the removal saying that there were other means of expression (he refers to them as democratic [rights]) available to the people: the system of the peoples' representative councils, the activities of the political consultative councils and the mass organizations, the pointing to names and criticizing erring State workers in the newspapers and at meetings, and the reform of workstyle movement of the Party and the criticism and self-criticism mechanism. He did mention that these means of socialist democracy were not perfect. He suggested, however, that these were sufficient all the same.

From September 1980 the independent posting of big character posters and holding of great debates were forbidden and the full and free airing of views and news was no longer constitutionally sanctioned. There was

54 ibid., 4.
55 Wu Daying, "Xianfa Zhong Yinggai Quxiao 'Sida' de Tiaokuan", in Beijing Daily, 28/4/80, 3.
effectively no legal protection for using such means unsupervised by Party and State officials once this set of rights had been removed from the Constitution. In 1982, with the *sida* (four greats) removed, Chinese citizens were left with

"Citizens of the PRC enjoy freedom of speech, press, assembly, association, procession and demonstration".\(^{56}\)

Citizens thus retained rights of freedom of speech and the press. In practice though these amounted only to a collective right to speak and publish.

**THE CITIZEN AND STATE SECRETS**

Among the reasons given for removal of the *sida* (four greats) was that they permitted the revelation of State Secrets. Yang Xiufeng stated that "Promoting the 'four freedoms' leads easily to the leaking of important Party and state secrets...".\(^{57}\) This serious offence should also be dealt with through the legislation made for just that purpose.

There was a duty of Chinese citizens laid out in Article 57 of the 1978 Constitution:

"Citizens must...safeguard state secrets".\(^{58}\).

It was reiterated in the 1982 version. Article 50 read:

"The citizens of the PRC must safeguard state secrets, take care of

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\(^{56}\) Article 34 of the *Constitution*, 1982

\(^{57}\) Yang Xiufeng in op. cit., 2.

\(^{58}\) *Constitution*, 1978.
public property, observe labour discipline, observe public order and respect social ethics and good customs and habits.\textsuperscript{59}

If taken literally this stipulation put an ill-defined responsibility onto the shoulders of ordinary citizens to avoid publicly disseminating news or information which could possibly be interpreted by authorities as part of what should be kept secret. It implied that citizens had access to state secrets. The \textit{Peoples' Daily} contained an editorial in April 1980 which claimed that citizens knew a great many state secrets through the Party's news dissemination to them\textsuperscript{60}. It specifically mentioned internal transmission of documents and the relaying of instructions.

"Our country belongs to the people as a whole. Since they enjoy extensive democratic rights, many aspects of the work they are engaged in, the things they come into contact with, the documents they have read and the instructions relayed to them from higher levels are Party and state secrets, some of which are very important. This requires that every citizen must strengthen his concept of guarding state secrets, attach importance to guarding state secrets, pay attention to guarding state secrets in everything he does and cultivate a good habit of guarding state secrets\textsuperscript{61}.

China had been fairly well closed to the outside world for a long period and the system of trusting citizens with politically important news and information was defined in part according to status. People who were Party members would have fairly broad access to internal transmission of news downward from Party leaders. On some occasions sensitive or previously

\textsuperscript{59} Constitution, 1980.

\textsuperscript{60} 15 April 1980, in \textit{SWB}, BII/4.

\textsuperscript{61} ibid.
sensitive news would be transmitted to trusted citizens. Some citizens were excluded from direct access to such news transmission if they were labelled untrustworthy, or, for example, had married a foreigner and thus entered the no-man's land between Chinese and outsiders.

In that same editorial, which accompanied the republication of the 1950s State Secrets regulations, it was claimed that:

"Our Party, government, army, people's organizations as well as economic, cultural and other departments have a relatively perfect security system, strict discipline in keeping state secrets and corresponding security organs."\(^2\)

Logically, no citizen should be in the position of receiving state secrets if the state secret holders behaved responsibly. How strictly the divulging of State Secrets could be dealt with by law would be very difficult to estimate. The Peoples' Daily editorial of April 1980 mentioned the lack of distinction between state secret material and ordinary material during the period under study: "because the pernicious influence of anarchism spread by Lin Biao and the gang of four has remained rather serious, it has been quite common for no distinction to be made between outsiders and insiders as to who should have access to classified materials. Moreover, many comrades have failed to understand the necessity and importance of keeping state secrets in the new historical situation, while other comrades, including some leading cadres, have not been aware of the enemy's presence and have been negligent in guarding Party and state secrets..."\(^3\) Further, remarks were

\(^2\) ibid.

\(^3\) ibid.
made during this period in official pronouncements to the effect that many State Secrets had become widely known preceding and during this period due to the carelessness of leading officials and the activities of their children.

Any citizen who wished to stay safe would effectively have had to refrain from any kind of independent news dissemination. A greater amount of democracy within socialist democracy, according to the laws, could be guaranteed by tightening up leakages of State Secrets at the source. Articles 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the State Secrets regulations did deal with the guarding of state secrets within State organs. Yet, while the Constitutional duty of citizens to guard secrets remained, ordinary citizens were potentially liable to suffer if they tried to behave independently.

COUNTER-REVOLUTION AND INDEPENDENT DISSEMINATION

The leakage of secrets by Chinese citizens to foreigners could result in being charged with the crime of "counter-revolution". Should the government or legal organs interpret dissemination of news and comment as violating State Secrets provisions, or as potentially encouraging others to oppose the State's, meaning the Party's, political power, the disseminators could be prosecuted as counter-revolutionaries. The celebrated convicted counter-revolutionary of 1979, Wei Jingsheng, stated during his trial that "Anything that is written can be thought of as being incitement". The defence could only be that the reporter was not aware that the matter was secret. Wei Jingsheng was sentenced to imprisonment in 1979 with the justification drawn from a combination of PRC laws and conventions. He

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64 see State Secrets regns

65 Wei Jingsheng
had initiated public dissemination of news and views which openly challenged Deng Xiaoping's power.

Several disseminators of news during this period, who worked independently of Party supervision using wall posters and mimeographed publications, were prosecuted and imprisoned. The published record of Wei Jingsheng's trial showed the great difficulty for an independent disseminator to prove his innocence under the conditions at this time. No-one could legitimately complain about being prosecuted as a counter-revolutionary if he challenged a member of the leadership as the Constitution made it a responsibility of citizens to support the leadership and other legislation defines opposition as counter-revolutionary.

Yang Xiufeng made his point: "...Some bad people of the great cultural revolution and people like Wei Jingsheng who emerged after the downfall of the Gang of Four acted in just this way." 66

NEWS TRANSMISSION TO HIGHER AUTHORITIES

One further legally endorsed right to disseminate news, not to the public at large but up into the offices of the government, was contained in the right to complain. Article 55 in the 1978 Constitution stated that:

_Citizens have the right to lodge complaints with organs of state at any level against any person working in an organ of state, enterprise or institution for transgression of law or neglect of duty. Citizens have the right to appeal to organs of state at any level against any infringement of their rights. No-one shall suppress such complaints and appeals or retaliate_
against persons making them\textsuperscript{67}.

These rights of complaint and appeal to the government and its agencies contained the potential for citizens to pass on news through writing letters or speaking to officials. Byron Weng noted that "citizens' rights to make criticisms of and proposals, reports, appeals or complaints to any organ of state" were protected in the 1982 version of the Constitution with more detail\textsuperscript{68}. The relevant Article, No. 40, guaranteed protection and even compensation for subsequently incurred loss to citizens who choose to exercise those rights:

\textit{Citizens of the PRC have the right to put forward criticisms and suggestions to any state organ or state functionary. They have the right to appeal to and file complaints or accusations to the state organ concerned against any state organ or state functionary for transgression of law or neglect of duty. However, no one is allowed to fabricate or distort facts and wilfully file false charges or carry out frameups. The state organ concerned must clearly examine the facts and be responsible in handling any appeal, complaint or accusation filed by a citizen. No one shall suppress such appeals, complaints or accusations or retaliate against persons making them. People suffering loss by reason of infringement by any state organ or state functionary of their rights as a citizen have the right to compensation\textsuperscript{69}.}

These guarantees had not been inserted in the 1978 Constitution. Their inclusion in 1982 implied acknowledgement by the leadership that citizens

\textsuperscript{67} Constitution, 1978.

\textsuperscript{68} Weng, Byron, \textit{China Quarterly}, 505.

\textsuperscript{69} 1982 Constitution
suffered or were liable to suffer persecution at the hands of outraged functionaries. They were probably inserted as a compensation for removing the less controlled means of news dissemination referred to as the "four greats". It had been quite clear from 1978 that the communication of news via letters and visits to higher authorities was encouraged.

"The masses' right to express their opinions on state affairs or to put forward criticisms or suggestions to personnel of the state organs is solemnly set out in our Constitution and nobody can violate it. It would be quite wrong for anybody to think that the abolition of the sida (four greats) implied limiting the masses' democratic rights" claimed the Nanfang Daily.

The citizens of the PRC thus could seek out responsible officials and leaders to pass on news in the form of lodgement of an appeal or complaint directly to the official organization with authority over his concern through that organization's mass work department.

Keeping track of public attitudes to the government was concurrently achieved through this institution, in line with Lenin's observation that letters from labourers (or other ordinary people) were a political "barometer". Chairman Mao several times instructed that letters from the people had to be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately. "Legitimate" requests were to be fulfilled. Handling of such letters was regarded as increasing the liaison between the people, and the Communist Party and the peoples'
government. In other words the letters provided a useful system of direct news communication from the public.

In 1977 and 1978 mass work in general was emphasized again by the country's leadership. In early September 1977 a People's Daily commentator's article called upon the leaders at the various levels of political authority to "Pay Attention To The People's Letters And Visits", in line with the reports made by the Party Chairman and Vice-Chairmen at the 11th National CCP Congress. The commentator remarked on a backlog of submissions from people in the forms of letters and visits which were being ignored. At some point prior to July 1978 Chairman Hua and the Party Central Committee issued an instruction note on handling letters and visits. Many Party committees and other offices held meetings about the handling of this work and remarked on a great increase in numbers of letters received in 1978 over 1977. The October 1978 Red Flag journal also carried a "short critical piece" calling for greater attention to peoples' "letters and visits work".

The official justification for this was that the previous leadership had neglected or abused submissions from the masses of the people. Re-

73 ibid.
74 People's Daily, 4/9/77, 2.
75 from US Summary of World Broadcasts - Daily Report - China, 7 Sep 77 E5 (trans of Peking Domestic Service in Mandarin 2230 GMT 3 Sep 77).
76 July 78 Hua and Party instruction note; Honan Provincial CCP Committee held a conf. from 28 June to 5 July to implement this instruction (20 July 78 H1 Daily Report 13 July Broadcast).
77 See reports collected in Daily Report for that period.
78 Red Flag Oct 78.
emphasizing mass liaison work was probably designed in part to satisfy most of the citizenry that the Party leadership would indeed look after their interests by looking into and sometimes even solving their difficulties. The new leadership, however, also desired to learn what news they could from the people's submissions about supporters of ousted rivals still holding positions of influence and power.

XIAODAO XIAOXI

With the modern developments of technology "mass communications" media made available swiftly, to large numbers of people, the same news and other messages. Newspapers, radio broadcasts, television, magazines and newsreels thus have the potential for great influence within a community. In the Peoples' Republic of China, technologies of communication had advanced to the stage where many thousands or millions of people could be and were reached with the same message simultaneously. The mass media of communications co-existed with the traditional and simple forms of news exchange and with the restricted circulation elite media. The disintegration of the major newspapers and broadcasting services during the "Cultural Revolution", and the use of mass media in the early 1970s for political propaganda instead of news, caused Chinese citizens to rely on alternate news sources such as those provided orally through their networks of connections.

The importance of the "rumour" news channel can be demonstrated by Chinese authorities' concern to diminish its influence. Gan Xifen, an authority of the Chinese People's University on journalism and the mass media, wrote in the first issue of Xinwen Xuelun Ji79 arguing for more

79 Gan Xifen, " Shenme shi Xinwen", in XWXLI, No. 1, Septembre 1980, 11-36, 32.
reporting of important news in official media to strengthen their position vis-à-vis that of xiaodao xiao. Reliance on this alternate form of news might have gradually diminished as the mass media were developed with greater volume and variety of news in the early 1980s. Results of the Beijing survey suggest, however, that citizens continued to listen seriously to xiaodao xiaoxi. It is quite clear that in the PRC, both before and after 1978, this alternative channel of news dissemination was important and influential. The news content of xiaodao xiaoxi is impossible to document. What shaped it and what factors affected its level of influence and importance in competition with the mass media can only be inferred from small clues. The authors of Chinese works on journalism acknowledged the unofficial news network, and the system of internal transmission of documents, but did not analyze these. How much either of these was relied upon for important decision-making can be judged only by implication. Before 1978, the poor availability of news in public media implied that other channels must have been in use.

The reaction of the public to official journalism was influenced by their past experiences of its reliability. Readers of newspapers in Beijing appeared to have found the official media lacking. Alternative news media flourished for a short period between 1978 and 1980, but were effectively eliminated by political actions on the part of the government. These actions included the altering of the Constitution of the Peoples' Republic of China to make independent use of alternate news publication illegal for citizens. It was likely that the Chinese public relied a great deal on verbal communication of news important to them.
The period examined in this dissertation was a critical one for the Chinese press. It saw a more open approach both to news reporting and to the operation of the media. At the same time the limits to openness were always in place. News collection and circulation in China were intimately tied to politics. The significance of the period from 1978 to 1982 was that it was the beginning of a new era of political change concentrating on economic growth. Thus senior Party leaders were interested in having more detailed reporting of news, both through internal channels and to the public generally. News reporting internally assisted them better to supervise officials in the implementation of policies and the administration of the country. News from internal reports also allowed leaders the opportunity to discover and draw into the Party network people who demonstrated competence in their particular fields. Finally, internal reports assisted leaders to deal with discontent and potential opposition. Public reporting of news about a wide variety of subjects substantially increased. Many different parts of the economy and society were covered in increasing detail.

News was seen by the leadership, at the beginning of this era of national economic reform, as a distinct and useful component of propaganda. Journalists and editors were encouraged to collect, edit and distribute news within the bounds of the rules and conventions of Communist Party rule over China. The realities of news circulation and political influence over it during the first years of the decade have been demonstrated in the preceding chapters.

Individually and as groups, reporters and editors have had their own views about what was important news, and about how and when important events should be publicly reported. The Party leadership has consistently
refused to permit wide and public dissemination of news which might have led to divergent political views, in particular those which challenged Communist Party rule of China. The leaders demonstrated their refusal to accept the circulation of independent publications containing politically sensitive news in 1980. They also maintained a tight control over the activities of news office staff through a combination of training, disciplines and sanctions. Journalists were expected to be highly professional news gatherers but to distribute the news in accordance with instructions of the Party committees supervising their offices.

While reforms were implemented from 1978 to provide a great variety of factual and believable news content in the newspapers, journalists in the 1980s did not gain legal protection from interference and persecution by Party cadres. Their work remained subject to general direction by the Party and, in some cases, deliberate intervention by Party leaders.

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In 1989, the era of economic reforms begun in 1978 under Deng Xiaoping's rule reached a climax. After the death of his protege, Hu Yaobang, there were sustained public protests in central Beijing and other major cities, followed by the removal of Deng's protege, Zhao Ziyang, from the direct exercise of political power. Journalistic news gathering and the public circulation of their news reports came under active and vociferous scrutiny during a widespread public movement led by students. Amongst the general issues brought to the fore were criticisms of the running of the public newspapers. These were described in terms of a lack of "freedom of the press" and a lack of "objective reporting". In April and early May some newspapers, including the Science and Technology Daily, the Peasants' Paper and the World Economic Herald published news of demonstrations
being held in city streets. Many other newspapers carried little or no news of these events. Debates going on within the news offices over the public reporting of these and other matters must have been quite intense for journalists joined in publicly with the street activities.

By May 9th, over 1,000 Chinese journalists had signed a petition which was delivered to their national professional organization, the All China Federation of Journalists. The petition was intended for the eyes of Party officials responsible for propaganda and the news offices and requested a "sincere and equal" dialogue on press reforms with leading Central Committee officials in charge of the news offices. The journalists argued that "the principle that important news events should be made known to the people" had been violated. They claimed that media coverage of momentous political events in Tiananmen Square and on Beijing streets had been "far from enough and not objective". Many journalists had written regular reports of the events and taken many news photos, but the majority of these had been withheld from publication. There were indications that some journalists supported the demonstrations and that others, while not necessarily agreeing with all the sentiments expressed by students and members of the public, signed the journalistic petition. Journalists seemed to have been generally annoyed that they were not permitted to report sufficient news of the events in fact, regardless of their differing views on the bias which should be given to the reports.

1 Louise do Rosario, "No news, few lies" in Far Eastern Economic Review, 4 May 1989, 12.
2 South China Morning Post, 11 May, 1989, 10.
3 CD 10/5/89
4 personal sources
A report about the submission of the petition published in the Science and Technology Daily included the comment that "In fact, severe abuses exist in the current system of reporting news in China". It appeared for a time that some Party leaders were prepared to accede to certain of the demands made by the journalists and protesting students. For example, on May 10th the Minister of Supervision, Xue Mufeng, stated that more open reporting of corruption cases would be allowed, in response to students' demands that authorities deal severely with widespread corruption.

Party propaganda official Hu Qili met editors but warned, according to a Hong Kong report, that "outspoken reporters who had taken part in student marches might suffer". For some days, the newspapers generally seemed to report more news of the street demonstrations, to the extent of making them appear more prominent than the first visit of the leaders of the Soviet Union to China in several decades. After China's leaders declared "martial law" on the 20th of May, there was very little reporting of the public protests while news staff resorted to the time-honoured tactic of reporting of events in other nations to make their points. On June 4th the military moved into the area of the greatest concentration of street protests, near Tiananmen Square and crushed the protests with guns and tanks. People were killed and a


6 South China Morning Post, Thurs 11 May, 1989, 10.

7 ibid. Note that the discussion took place on 11th May.

8 15th to 19th May

9 For example the China Youth News quoted the Hungarian premier as saying the army should not be used to solve internal political problems and reported the Polish premier declaring his private income and assets. See Mark O'Neill, Reuters, Beijing report, "Unofficial News Booms in Martial Law Peking", May 25, 1989.
broadcaster who attempted to report the bloody events as they were happening was removed in mid-broadcast. In the months that followed many journalists who had been openly involved in the demonstrations underwent questioning and political sessions. Editors from those newspapers which had reported the protests during April and May have subsequently been removed from their posts and replaced.

The events of 1989 demonstrated that, in the Peoples' Republic of China, any autonomy exercised by journalists must be short-lived. The nature of Party controls and officially defined responsibilities of news office staff preclude freedom of the press in the Western sense. Chinese journalists may continue to protest abuses of their system of news collection and production, but cannot expect the Party authorities to release their holds on politically useful mass media. Nor do the majority of Chinese news office staff expect leaders to act on journalists' protests except in instances where it is politically expedient to do so.
COMMON ABBREVIATIONS:

BJRB  Beijing Ribao  Beijing Daily

GMRB  Guangming Ribao  Guangming Daily

GMRBTX  Guangming Ribao Tongxun  Guangming Daily

GRRB  Gongren Ribao  Workers' Daily

HQ  Hong Qi  Red Flag

RMRB  Renmin Ribao  Peoples' Daily

XHWC  Xinhua Wencong  Xinhua Publishing House
1978, 1979, 1980, 1981,
(edited by Xinhua She, Xinwen Yewu Bianjibu)

XWDX  Xinwen Daxue  Xinhua Publishing House

XWNLJ  Xinwen Luncong  Xinhua Publishing House,
Vol 1, April 1981.
(edited by Xinhua She, Xinwen Yanjiu Bu)

XWXLJ  Xinwen Xuelun Ji  Chinese Peoples' University Press
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GLOSSARY

baodao 报道
baodao sixiang 报道思想
baodao tishi 报道提示
baogao 报告
baogao wenxue 报告文学
baoxi bu baoyou 报喜不报忧
beiyong gao 备用稿
bitan 笔谈
bian cai tong heyi 编采通合一
bumen 部门
buyong gao 不用稿
caufang 采访
caufang zhaiji 采访摘记
ceji 侧记
chengren 承认
chu yidian timu 出一点题目
chuanbo 传播
chuanbo de fangshi 传播的方式
chuanbo gongju 传播工具
chuanbu 传布
chuanda 传达
chuanda huiyi 传达会议
chuangao 传告
Cihai 辞海
cujinpai 促进派
cuoshi 措施
dai yanjiu gao 待研究稿
dazibao 大字报
diaocha 调查
diaocha baogao 调查报告
dongtai 动态
dongxiang 动向
duzhe laixin 读者来信
duzhe laixin laifang 读者来信来访
duanping 短评
fabiao 发表
fabu 发布
fabuzhe 发布者
faxian 发现
fanying 反映
fangwen ji 访问记
fangxiang 方向
fangzhen 方针
feifa zuzhi 非法组织
fenxi 分析
gongji xing 攻击性
gongju 工具
gongzuo tongxun 工作通讯
gongzuo huiyi 工作会议
gongzuo yanjiu 工作研究
guan wei jizhe 官喂记者
guanian 观点
huibao hui 汇报会
jiguan 机关
jimi 机密
jizhe 记者
jizhe bu 记者部
jizhe laixin 记者来信
jizhe shouze 记者守则
jiagong 加工
jianxun 简讯
jiaoliu huiyi 交流会议
jiefang sixiang 解放思想
jieshi 解释
jietou hangwei jianghua 街头巷尾讲话
jingen xingshi 紧跟形势
jinritan 今日谈
jingyan 经验
jingshen 精神
jingxin paozhi 精心炮制
ju 局
Jueding 决定
juefei ouran 绝非偶然
Jueyi 决议
看法
keyong gao  可用稿
laixin  来信
laixin laifang  来信来访
lichang  立场
lingdao yitu  领导意图
lundian  论点
lunju  论据
lunshuowen  论说文
lunti  论题
lunzheng  论证
lunzheng fangfa  论证方法
manhua  漫画
mudi  目的
neibu cankao  内部参考
neibu chuanda  内部传达
neibu qingkuang fanying  内部情况反映
neican  内参
neiwu  内务
pengtou huiyi  碰头会议
piping baodao  批评报道
piping xin  批评信
pizhuan  批转
pizhun  批准
pianmian xing  片面性
pianpo  偏颇
pingjia  评价
pinglun  评论
qifa  启发
qingbao  情报
qingcha bangongshi  清查办公室
qingkuang  情况
qingkuang jianbao  情况简报
qingshi  请示
quanshuo  劝说
qunzhong gongzuo  群众工作
renmin didui zhengfu  人民敌对政府
renmin qunzhong  人民群众
renwu tongxun 人物通讯
shelun 社论
shijian tongxun 事件通讯
shuping 评述
sida 四大
si xiang jiben yuanze 四项基本原则
si xiang 思想
si xiang guandan 思想观点
si xiang jiaogong chang 思想加工厂
souji 搜集
tanhua 谈话
tantao yu jianyi 探讨与建议
ting baogao 听报告
ting chuanda baogao 听传达报告
tongxun 通讯
tongxunyuan 通讯员
wenguo zexi 闻过则喜
wenxian 文献
wenzhang 文章
Xiandai Hanyu Cidian 现代汉语词典
xiao guangbo 小广播
xiaodaoo xiaoxi 小道消息
xiaoxi 消息
Xiezuo Zhishi Congshu 写作知识丛书
xinwen 新闻
xinwen chanpin 新闻产品
xinwen Daxue 新闻大学
xinwen baodao 新闻报道
xinwen ganbu 新闻干部
xinwen gongzuo 新闻工作
xinwen jigou 新闻机构
xinwen mingan 新闻敏感
xinwen textie 新闻特写
xinwen zhanxian 新闻战线
xinxi 信息
xinxi de chuanbo 信息的传播
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