

Leadership Change in China's Provinces

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If any lesson can reliably be drawn from the zigzag course of domestic politics in the People's Republic of China (PRC) since 1949 it is that no leader can leave office confident that his policies will be implemented faithfully in his absence. The apparent permanence of the recent shift in emphasis from politicization to professional expertise as the basic criterion of bureaucratic excellence, and the concomitant focus on economic development at the expense of political goals, is an illusion camouflaging a much less stable political reality. That reality includes a massive Chinese Communist Party (CCP) with some 40 million members, one-third of whom joined the party during the leftist upheavals of the Cultural Revolution (1966-76) and are therefore for reasons of both training and self-preservation likely to oppose the current stress on technical competence and economic pragmatism.¹ The potential for resentment on the part of these millions of party members is considerable, especially since these Cultural Revolution activists now see their careers threatened by the suddenly favored experts, many of whom they had personally driven out of office in the late 1960's.

¹See William deB. Mills, "Generational Change in China," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), November-December 1983, pp. 16-35, esp. pp. 16-20, for a discussion of this assumption. "Generational Change in China" treats the central leadership changes that constituted the basis on which the events analyzed in the present article unfolded.

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That Deng Xiaoping foresees this as a threat to the perpetuation of his policies once he steps down—which can hardly be postponed much longer, given his advanced age—has been evident since the 12th Party Congress in September 1982, for it was there that he launched his program to transfer power from veteran revolutionary leaders of his own era to a new generation of younger, better educated officials. As a result, nearly half of the members of the previous Central Committee (CC) were dropped.²

But it was not until the spring of 1983 that the seriousness and scope of Deng's commitment to bring a new generation of leaders to power before the old leadership retired became apparent. Between early March and late April, in a centrally mandated streamlining and rejuvenation process which to the outsider seemed to occur with astounding speed and lack of rancor, some 950 of China's 1,350 top provincial leaders retired and were replaced by about 160 new officials. This left China's provinces under the control of much smaller leading bodies composed of officials, who, presumably, would be both more efficient and more responsive to central policies. In brief, Deng attempted to transfer regional power to men of his own choosing to solidify the changes that had been made in the spring 1982 streamlining of the State Council apparatus³ and in the fall 1982 selection of the 12th Central Committee.

Following a summary of the leadership changes that took place during the spring of 1983 at the provincial

²See Hong Yong Lee, "China's 12th Central Committee: Rehabilitated Cadres and Technocrats," *Asian Survey* (Berkeley, CA), June 1983, pp. 673-91, and Mills, loc. cit.

³State Council reorganization is discussed in John Burns's useful background study "Reforming China's Bureaucracy, 1979-82," *Asian Survey*, June 1983, pp. 692-722, esp. pp. 707-14. In brief, according to a May 4, 1982, New China News Agency (hereafter Xinhua) report, the State Council reduced its number of vice-premiers from 13 to 2 and its number of ministries from 52 to 41. See Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: China* (Washington, DC—hereafter FBIS-CHI), May 4, 1982, pp. K/1-5.

level, this essay will examine the experiences of two provinces—Shanxi and Hunan—in order to get some sense of the problems underlying the superficially smooth transfer of power. Shanxi has been selected because in many ways it is typical of a number of provinces: the center replaced the former leaders with its own men, who then proceeded to manage the province with little subsequent central interference. Hunan is a much more unusual case. Not only did the incumbent first secretary there retain his position, he did so despite direct and persistent high-level central intervention. In each case, however, the center revealed a willingness to compromise. In so doing, Deng rejected the Cultural Revolution model of politics by class struggle, choosing instead to coopt potential opponents in order to unify the party behind his reforms. The second part of this essay, therefore, will focus on the methods used by the center to attain this goal of party unity.

Unwieldy Provincial Leaderships

The violent overthrow of China's revolutionary generation during the Cultural Revolution set the stage for the evolution of an awkward system of leadership at the pro-

vincial level. What had emerged in 1967 and 1968 as a unitary administrative structure (with the establishment of the "three-in-one" revolutionary committees to replace the old party and state organs) gradually degenerated by 1980 into a three-tiered faction-ridden committee system composed of the party, the government, and the provincial people's congress (PPC—the province's legislature).⁴ The first major change occurred between December 1970 and August 1971 when provincial party committees were reestablished. Interestingly, the restored party committees emerged directly from within the revolutionary committees and had no separate administration of their own. Thus, there was no separation between party and state bureaucracies, as was evidenced by the fact that provincial party first secretaries served concurrently as revolutionary committee chairmen.⁵ As the 1970's unfolded, leaders of the revo-

⁴For the details of this process, see David S. G. Goodman, "The Provincial Revolutionary Committee in the People's Republic of China, 1967–1979: An Obituary," *China Quarterly* (London), March 1981, pp. 49–79. In theory, the "three-in-one" revolutionary committees were to combine "revolutionary mass organizations, the People's Liberation Army, and revolutionary leading cadres of party and government organizations" (*ibid.*, p. 49). In practice, although they initially reflected this "Maoist coalition of revolutionary forces," they increasingly came to be dominated by party-state cadres (see Table 3 in *ibid.*, p. 69).

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 72.



The rostrum at the September 10, 1982, plenary session of the 12th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, which elected a new Central Committee and the Central Advisory Commission: in the first row from left to right, Zhao Ziyang, Deng Xiaoping, and Hu Yaobang; in the second row from left to right, Li Xiannian, Ye Jianying, Chen Yun, and Xu Xiangqian.

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lutionary generation who had been purged during the Cultural Revolution began to regain leadership positions,⁶ a process that continued and even accelerated after Mao Zedong's death in September 1976. Finally, by early 1980, the pre-Cultural Revolution system of provincial government reemerged, replacing the revolutionary committees,⁷ as recently resurrected people's congresses were convened to elect governors and vice-governors to head the provinces' people's governments.⁸

As a result, by 1983, there were three leadership committees in each province, with rehabilitated party veterans of the revolutionary generation sitting alongside younger officials who had gained high office at the veter-

ans' expense during the years of leftist ascendancy. Of the three, the party committee appeared to be the most powerful. Totalling perhaps a dozen secretaries, including a first secretary and occasionally a second or permanent secretary, the committee was assisted by a similar number of standing committee members as well as by several dozen regular committee members. While theoretically charged with general guidance on matters of party line and principle, party secretaries in fact took over a good deal of the day-to-day administrative work from the governors and vice-governors,⁹ who constituted the second most powerful leading body. Heading a bureaucracy of some two- to three-thousand cadres, this group of roughly 12 officials was formally responsible for the day-to-day administration of government affairs. The third group was composed of the chairman and about a dozen vice-chairmen of the people's congresses in each province (or municipality or region). Although formally

⁶Goodman reports that as of "September 1975, 84% of provincial leadership cadres were serving in the same province where they had been provincial-level cadres at the start of 1966" (ibid., p. 77).

⁷For a note on this restoration and a table of new provincial government leaders, see *Beijing Review*, Feb. 4, 1980, p. 5.

⁸Basic facts on people's congresses are given in Jacques Guillermez, *The Chinese Communist Party in Power, 1949-1975*, Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1972, pp. 114-15. For a discussion of provincial people's congresses before the Cultural Revolution, see Frederick Teiwes, "Provincial Politics in China: Themes and Variations," in John Lindbeck, Ed., *China: Management of a Revolutionary Society*, Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1971, pp. 117-25.

⁹The terms governor and vice-governor are used generically throughout this article. Included in addition to the heads of the provincial people's governments are the mayors and vice-mayors of the three provincial-level cities—Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin—as well as the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the five provincial-level autonomous regions: Xinjiang, Xizang (Tibet), Ningxia, Guangxi, and Nei Monggol (Inner Mongolia).

Figure 1: Numbers of Responsible Leaders at Provincial Level Before and After the 1983 Streamlining

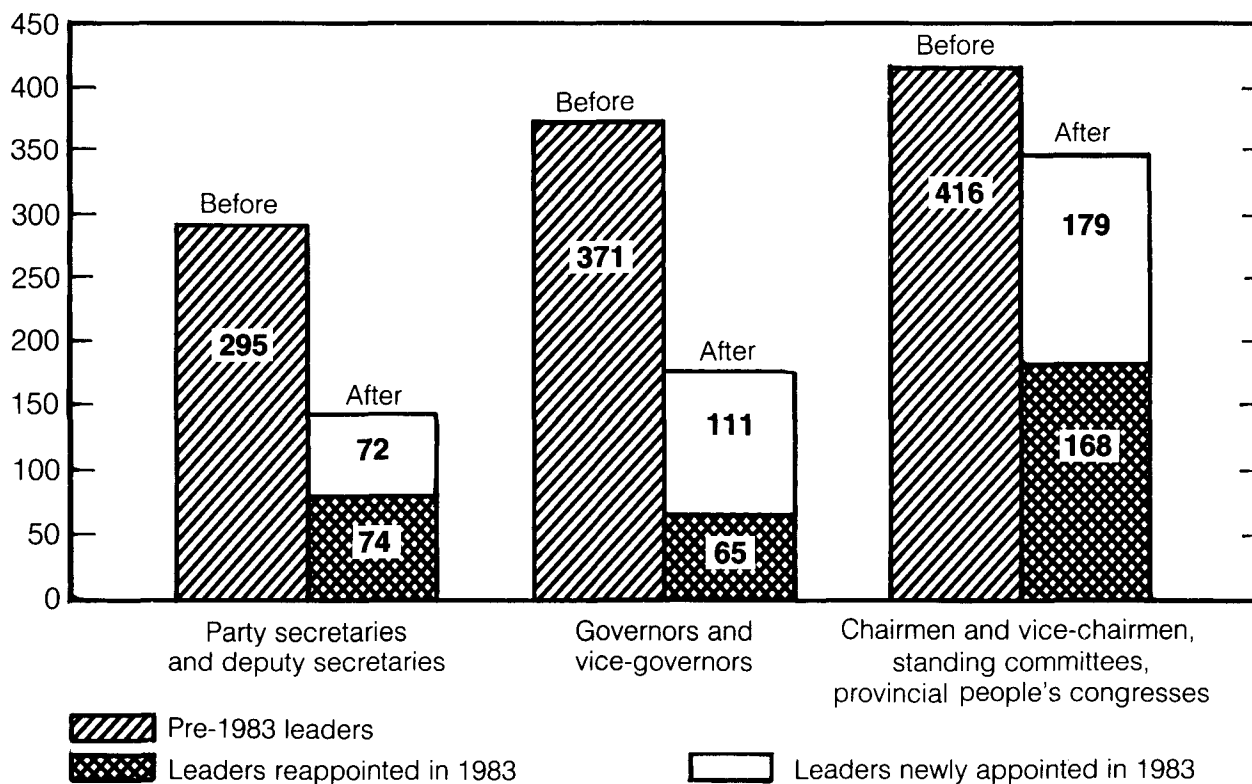


Table 1: Standardizing the Size of Provincial Leadership Bodies

	Range of members in old organizations		Range of members in new organizations	
	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
Number of party secretaries	5	15	4	6
Members on party standing committees	13	33	8	16
Number of governors and vice-governors	9	18	4	8
Number of chairmen and vice-chairmen of standing committees of provincial people's congresses	8	22	8	15

charged with overseeing the government, this group's real power does not appear to have been commensurate with its formal position of authority.

The work of these leadership bodies suffered because of overlapping functions, disunity, aging members, and sheer inefficiency of size. Before the spring streamlining, the average provincial leadership body—defined here as being composed of the first and deputy secretaries of the party committee, the governor and vice-governors, and the chairman and vice-chairmen of the standing committee of the provincial people's congress—had 16 members. If the full party committee or full standing committee of the people's congress were included, the number would of course be considerably larger.

Streamlining and Replacement

The first objective of the reform was to slash the size of the provinces' leading bodies, which were cut by some 38 percent, from 1,082 to 669 members, as shown in Figure 1. If one excludes the provincial people's congress standing committees, the least powerful of the three groups, the percentage of reduction is even greater, fully 50 percent. Indeed, the number of party secretaries was cut in half, declining from 295 to 146, that is, from an average of 10 to 5 per province. The number of governors and vice-governors decreased by a

similar amount, from 371 to 176, or from an average 12.8 to 6.7 per province. Only the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the people's congresses managed to survive the huge cuts, decreasing by less than 17 percent, from 416 to 347, or from 14 to 12 per province.

The aim of this streamlining was twofold: to create a more efficient provincial leadership, and to narrow the variations in leadership body sizes from province to province (see Table 1). The most striking move toward uniformity of size occurred among party secretaries. Before the reform, the number varied from five in Fujian¹⁰ to 15 in Sichuan; after the reform, the range was narrowed to only four to six. But if this effort succeeded in both reducing and making uniform the size of the leaderships of the provincial party committees, it also led to a marked variation in party leaders' titles. While the 18 incumbent first secretaries who remained in office retained this title, newly appointed provincial party chiefs were entitled "secretary." With rare exceptions,¹¹ their newly appointed subordinates were entitled "deputy secretary." Why the center allowed incumbents to retain their titles is unclear, though I suspect that central leaders may have considered such a concession a harmless compromise on the road to postreform stability. At any rate, despite this confusion of party titles, through the end of 1983, at least, the leadership situation appeared stable in China's provinces.

A second goal of the reform, and one accomplished with an even greater degree of success, was removal of those incumbents who were old, uneducated, or politically suspect. In the process of reducing the total size of leadership bodies by approximately 40 percent, 72 percent of the incumbents were removed. Of the 1,082 secretaries,¹² governors and vice-governors, and PPC chairmen and vice-chairmen, only 307 kept their positions. Another 125 (12 percent) obtained other assignments, frequently at lower levels. The majority of the remaining 650 (60 percent) appear to have retired in the conventional sense of the word,¹³ while those too influential to be easily forced into retirement succeeded in trading in their leadership posts for newly created advi-

¹⁰This had been reduced from 8 to 5 on October 15, 1982.

¹¹The exceptions are Heilongjiang, which has five secretaries, Qinghai, with three secretaries, and Shandong, which has two secretaries. In each of these cases, however, it is clear which of the secretaries is the chief of the party, although he has the same title as his deputies. See, e.g., Central Intelligence Agency, Directorate of Intelligence, *Directory of Chinese Officials: Provincial Organizations*. Washington, DC: CIA, August 1983, pp. 53, 115, and 127.

¹²If party committee standing committee members were included in this count, an additional 341 party officials just below the secretaries would be added to the 1,082 pre-reform total and an additional 187 to the postreform total.

¹³Some officials who lost their party secretarial posts and are here counted as having retired did retain membership in the provincial party committee. This is known to have occurred in Sichuan, which published a list of committee members. The extent to which officials in other provinces were downgraded from leadership posts to lower levels is uncertain, however, since most provinces have not published similar lists.

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sory positions. The most important such advisory body was the Central Advisory Commission (CAC), created by Deng as an honorary halfway house for veteran leaders reluctant to relinquish their leadership roles and perquisites.¹⁴ Below the central level, numerous lesser advisory positions have been constitutionally sanctioned,¹⁵ though their actual establishment has been slow, perhaps because those veterans who avoided retirement in the spring of 1983 have seen the writing on the wall.

The creation of these veterans' advisory bodies indicates a further refinement of the Chinese conception of retirement. For one thing, it suggests that the current leadership has found it politically expedient to introduce such mechanisms to help persuade veteran leaders to relinquish formal authority. For another, it implies that these "retired" leaders will continue to influence politics as long as they stay healthy. Their military achievements during the Chinese Civil War (1946-49), as well as their three decades of political experience since then, make this virtually inevitable.

In practical terms, such an approach to retirement may be quite beneficial to China's current modernization drive. These veterans' collective knowledge of local problems and local personalities is certainly a valuable resource, for senior central officials cannot possibly have such an intimate and detailed understanding of local conditions. Thus, even though some party veterans may have remained active members of party or advisory committees, this does not detract from the stunning nature of the 1983 provincial transfer of power. Indeed, the peaceful removal over a six-week period of some 72 percent of a nation's top provincial leaders, under conditions that allow the new leaders to benefit from their predecessors' knowledge and experience, is an achievement few countries have ever matched.

The rather substantial figures on transfer and retirement conceal wide variations according to institution and level in the hierarchy. Perhaps most surprising was the relative stability of the provincial party first secretaries, 62 percent of whom (18) remained in office. Some, such as Ren Zhongyi of Guangdong and Xiang Nan of Fujian, were not expected to retire, since they were relatively recent appointees whose career patterns suggested ties to Deng Xiaoping. Others, however, such as 70-year-old Duan Junyi of Beijing and Liu Jie of Henan, resisted retirement despite public calls for the aged to



Xiang Nan (left), leader of the Fujian Provincial Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, shown in 1981 with Lu Jiaxi, President of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

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make way for youth and despite being elected to the CAC. Moreover, the resistance of another group of first secretaries—younger leaders with leftist ties—was something of a surprise. Most notable among this group was Hunan's Mao Zhiyong, whose fortunes will be the focus of a later section of this essay.

In contrast to party first secretaries, only three governors¹⁶ and seven PPC chairmen retained their posts. Seven of the 26 removed governors were appointed chairmen of their provincial people's congresses, a "promotion" to a nominal position of authority over the provincial government.

Below these three top positions, the picture becomes increasingly complex. Only 74 (25 percent) of China's 295 provincial party secretaries¹⁷ retained their posts. Of the 221 removed, 167 (57 percent of the original total) retired and 54 (18 percent) were transferred. Interestingly, not all of those removed were long-entrenched members of provincial party apparatuses. Some had been in their positions for just a year or so, having assumed office during a preliminary change of personnel that had taken place throughout the provinces in 1982.

¹⁶The three governors are Chan Lei of Heilongjiang, Wang Daohan of Shanghai, and Ismail Amat of Xinjiang.

¹⁷The generic term "secretary" refers to all first secretaries, second secretaries, third secretaries, permanent secretaries, secretaries, and deputy secretaries. In addition to the secretaries of various rank, standing committees also have other members who rank below the secretaries. The term "standing committee" as it is used in this essay includes all the secretaries, who together generally constitute about half the standing committee, as well as these other officials. The full party committee of a province is several times as large and, judging from its virtual invisibility in the media, may well wield very little power. The fate of the lesser members of the party committees in the spring 1983 streamlining is unclear.

¹⁴For a description of the CAC, see Mills, loc. cit., pp. 29-31. In theory, election to this body at the 12th Party Congress in September 1982 singled out veteran leaders for retirement. As of February 1984, however, four first secretaries so "honored" remained in their old posts. How these durable veterans—Duan Junyi of Beijing, Gao Yang of Hebei, Liu Jie of Henan, and Guo Feng of Liaoning—have managed to accomplish this is unclear.

¹⁵See Article 28 of the Party Constitution in *Beijing Review*, Sept. 20, 1982, p. 17.

Only about half of these 35 newly promoted secretaries retained their posts after the spring 1983 reform.

Even fewer incumbent governors and vice-governors—18 percent, or 65 of the 371 total—retained office. Of the 306 removed, 237 (64 percent of the total) retired and 69 (19 percent) were transferred. Only seven of these were transferred to posts clearly constituting a promotion. Of the other 62, 60 were sent to a PPC post and two to even less important Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference¹⁸ posts.

A considerably larger number of PPC chairmen and vice-chairmen retained office—fully 40 percent (168) of the 416 incumbents. Of the 248 removed, all but two retired, as far as can be determined from the very limited information available on individuals at this level. The exceptions were Wang Fang, who was promoted to party head of Zhejiang, and Xu Jiatun,¹⁹ who concurrently was Jiangsu provincial first secretary.

Rejuvenation and Professionalism

With aged and leftist incumbents replaced in the top leadership posts by a dramatically smaller number of officials, formal positions of authority in China's provinces were transferred to a considerable degree to a new generation of younger and better educated leaders. The average age of provincial party leaders dropped from 63 to 56, and the proportion with college educations nearly quadrupled, increasing from one-tenth to nearly two-fifths—thereby exceeding the Central Committee's new standards, announced on February 22, 1983, that one-third of provincial party leaders be college-trained and that at least one member of the party committee be no more than 55 years old.²⁰

¹⁸The Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) is an advisory body composed of numerous groups outside the formal party structure, including such diverse groupings as national minorities, overseas Chinese, noncommunist political parties, religious sects, and mass organizations, among others. The CPPCC has no actual political power, although it has been called upon in recent years to lend support to the CCP in its current modernization drive. For example, in her Apr. 8, 1985, speech closing the 3rd Session of the 6th CPPCC National Committee in Beijing, Chairwoman Deng Yingchao urged members to "work hard" to "make even greater contributions to invigorating China's economy and reforming the economic structure." See Xinhua, Apr. 8, 1985, in *FBIS-CHI*, Apr. 10, 1985, p. K/8.

¹⁹Xu was later appointed as the first director of the Hong Kong Bureau of Xinhua (June 1983).

²⁰Xinhua, Feb. 22, 1983, in *FBIS-CHI*, Feb. 22, 1983, pp. K/3-4. Apparently, the new CC standards announced in February 1982 are still very much in force. In a recent interview with reporters from Hong Kong and Macao, party General Secretary Hu Yaobang noted that some 900,000 veteran cadres had already stepped down throughout the country. The number would reach 2 million next year, he said. Hu also noted that a reshuffling of the top leaders of 107 departments of the CC and the State Council, as well as of the 29 provincial, municipal, and autonomous region governments, was underway and that by June 1985 more than 70 percent of the leading cadres of these units would be under 60 years of age. See Xinhua, Apr. 9, 1985, in *FBIS-CHI*, Apr. 10, 1985, p. E/3. It should be noted that the ages given throughout this text are as of the streamlining of 1983.

While recognizing the rapid progress made in improving the quality of provincial leadership, one must be careful not to overstate this achievement, particularly since Chinese media made considerable effort to give the impression that the personnel changes were even more striking than they actually were. Both provincial and central media consistently distorted the magnitude of the reforms, giving only partial statistics, overlooking the relative importance of the various members of a given leadership body, and publishing biographic information only on exceptionally young or well-educated appointees. A typical report on Shanxi's new leaders, for example, singled out two of six new party officials because of their engineering backgrounds, ignoring the other four.²¹ And in another highly publicized case, a 42-year-old Western-educated chemist, Kang Beisheng, observed in an interview on Fujian radio that her election as vice-chairman of the Fujian PPC "represents the attention paid by the whole country to intellectuals."²²

But are these young technicians the founding generation of a new ruling class in China, or are they merely token members of leadership bodies controlled by party activists? Put somewhat differently, did the streamlining succeed in setting the stage for the transfer of power to a new elite composed of technocrats, or did it merely accomplish the much more modest goal of transferring power to younger leaders with traditional backgrounds? At present, at least, the latter seems to be the case (although the rate of advancement over the next five years of the young experts newly appointed to high rank—see Table 2 on page 30—will be a good indicator whether the technocrat is gaining in relative influence vis-à-vis the political cadre). While it is undeniable that China's new provincial leaders are *on average* younger and more familiar with technical subjects than were their predecessors, political careerists do not appear to have lost their predominant position to intellectuals. The clearest evidence of this is provided by the fate of party chiefs. Not only were two-thirds of the incumbents retained, but even among new appointees, no pattern of youth or exceptional professional expertise is apparent. Rather, they tend to have fairly traditional backgrounds as party or government administrators. For example, Shandong's new party chief, Su Yiran, is a rehabilitated revolutionary-generation Shandong official. Shanxi's Li Ligong and Jiangsu's Han Peixin both have administrative backgrounds. Zhejiang's Wang Fang spent most of his career in public security work.²³ These individuals may, of

²¹Shanxi radio, Mar. 21, 1983, in *FBIS-CHI*, Mar. 22, 1983, pp. R/2-4.

²²Fujian radio, May 2, 1983, in Joint Publications Research Service, *China Report: Political, Sociological, Military* (Washington, DC—hereafter *JPRS*), No. 83583, May 31, 1983, p. 8.

²³Brief biographies of Su, Wang, Han, and Li are given in "Four Secretaries of the CCP Provincial-Level Committees," *Issues and Studies* (Taipei), June 1983, No. 6, pp. 97-100.

Table 2: Young Technocrats to Watch

Individuals singled out by the media during the 1983 streamlining of their youth and expertise.

Name	Province or Municipality	Position	Age in 1983	Specialty
Bainma Dandzin	Qinghai	Vice-Governor	52	Doctor
Kang Beisheng	Fujian	Vice-Chairman, Standing Committee, Prov. People's Congress	42	Chemist
Li Debao	Zhejiang	Vice-Governor	47	Agronomist
Li Guixian	Liaoning	Member, Party Standing Committee	46	Engineer
Li Tieying	Liaoning	Secretary, Party Committee	47	Computer specialist
Ni Tianzheng	Shanghai	Vice-Mayor	45	Engineer
Wang Lianzheng	Heilongjiang	Vice-Governor	52	Agronomist
Zhu Zhongbao	Shanghai	Vice-Mayor	50	Engineer

course, be personally predisposed to listen carefully to the advice of specialists, but power at the highest level of provincial party politics appears to remain beyond the grasp of officials with college educations and careers in technical or economic fields.

At the next level, that of provincial governor, such officials play a greater, although still minority, role. Henan's governor, He Zhubang, 50 in 1983, was graduated from the Moscow Economic Institute²⁴ and was a former head of the Henan Planning Commission. Shanxi Governor Wang Senhao, a 50-year-old former chief engineer, replaced Luo Guibo, a vice-minister of foreign affairs in the late 1950's and 1960's, who retired at age 73. Jiangsu's new governor, Gu Xiulian, was a technician and former vice-minister of the State Planning Commission.²⁵ However, while education and technical competence are now highly acclaimed assets in China, information gleaned from biographic data, though sketchy, suggests that political reliability remains a far more important qualification for high office than does technical expertise.

Provincial Responsiveness

The speed and consistency with which the streamlining was implemented suggest that the reformers were in firm control nationwide. Following the usual Chinese practice of emulating selected pilot programs, most notably in this case the model reform in Sichuan, new leading bodies were announced for all remaining provinces—two-thirds between late March and mid-April alone. Almost formulaic Xinhua releases stressing the backgrounds of the youngest and most technically skilled appointees heralded the change of leadership in most provinces.

Such an extensive transfer of power required close

central supervision and coordination. The first, and most important, order of business was reform of the provincial party apparatus. Central party control rested on three props: use of innovative institutions; central guidance during the selection of local leaders; and Central Committee review of the results. Two institutions in particular facilitated the implementation of the changes: the Young Cadres Bureau under the CC Organization Department; and the Central Guiding Group for Structural Reform. The first was apparently designed to encourage the promotion of young cadres into leadership ranks; the second was responsible for sending work teams to various provinces to guide reform efforts there. The extent of Politburo supervision is generally unknown, but in at least one case, Deng is reported to have personally "perused the name list of middle-aged and young candidates for posts in Shanghai's leading municipal body" during a visit to Shanghai in February 1983.²⁶ Ordinarily, once new leadership lists were drawn up, they were sent to Beijing for CC approval; in some cases, most notably in Shanxi, the provincial party committee met not to elect its new leadership but merely to relay a CC decision on its makeup.²⁷

That central influence, while less blatant than in the party reforms, also played a crucial role in the government case is suggested by the speed and consistency of the results of the streamlining. Settlement of the more controversial party reforms before the convening of the

²⁴Xinhua, Apr. 29, 1983.

²⁵For Wang, see Xinhua, Apr. 29, 1983, in *FBIS-CHI*, May 5, 1983, p. R/6; for Gu, see Xinhua, Apr. 29, 1983.

²⁶Shanghai radio, Apr. 20, 1983, in *JPRS* No. 83422, May 6, 1983, p. 97.

²⁷Shanxi radio, Mar. 21, 1983, in *FBIS-CHI*, Mar. 22, 1983, pp. R/2-3. The standard language in Xinhua announcements of the formation of new party leading bodies was that they were formed "with the approval of the CCP Central Committee," as the March 23 report on Xinjiang's reform stated (in *FBIS-CHI*, Mar. 23, 1983, pp. T/1-2). The report noted that the decision was made "by secret ballots cast by more than 1,000 cadres who are party members at or above county and Communist Youth League levels in democratic nomination, through

people's congresses may well have enabled Dengists and their provincial allies to arrange governmental selections ahead of time. Twenty-three provinces elected government leaders between April 26 and May 5 alone, the others having selected their new leaders somewhat earlier. Consistency in terms of the number of vice-governors in each province and the virtually complete replacement of governors are indicative of the degree to which central standards were applied. Finally, the party policy recommendations for reform of provincial governments that had been announced at the 12th Party Congress the preceding fall were consistently implemented. The proceedings of the 12th congress also provided a clue to future provincial government appointments: 16 of the 26 new governors were elected to the Central Committee, 13 of them for the first time.

Despite the impressive results of provincial leadership streamlining, the steady stream of complaints in the media shortly thereafter about continued local resistance to central policies suggests that the upbeat public accounts of resounding success concealed a serious degree of opposition behind the scenes. The remainder of this essay will examine the ways in which this resistance manifested itself in two quite different provinces—Shanxi, which came under a new leadership; and Hunan, which retained a first secretary who rose to power during the last decade of Mao Zedong's life. The tactics adopted by the center to overcome this resistance will be the focus of the analysis that follows.

Shanxi: A Clean Sweep

While Chinese leaders were able to obscure the degree of opposition to the replacement of veteran leaders, media commentary on the implementation of Dengist reforms in Shanxi before and after the transfer of power reveals many of the party's techniques for eliciting regional compliance with central goals. The appearance of speed and harmony with which the media portrayed the selection of Shanxi's new leadership is belied by the complex range of techniques that had to be employed in the province to persuade local officials to implement central reforms.

observation and screening by the organization departments and with the approval of the party Central Committee after examination." The Xinhua report on Jiangxi differed, stating only that the leading body had been "readjusted" with CC "approval" (Mar. 24, 1983, in *FBIS-CHI*, Mar. 24, 1983, p. 0/2). A March 21 Shanxi radio report of that province's reform gave a picture of much tighter central control, stating that the Shanxi party standing committee met to announce the "Central Committee's notice" on the new leadership, which had been selected "with the help of" a central work group. The standing committee meeting, attended by over 800 cadres, lasted two days and resulted in unanimous "support for the Central Committee's decision" (in *FBIS-CHI*, Mar. 22, 1983, p. R/2).

The essence of the streamlining process in Shanxi seems to have been the replacement of indigenous factions with leaders not just who were younger and better educated but who owed allegiance to the center. The case of new party chief Li Ligong is illustrative. Prior to his return to Shanxi from Beijing in 1981, Secretary Li had not served in his native Shanxi for some 15 years, since the beginning of the Cultural Revolution in 1966. His background in the Communist Youth League (he served on the CYL Central Committee from 1954 to 1966)²⁸ and recent service at the center suggest ties to party General Secretary (and former CYL head) Hu Yaobang. Two of Li's three deputy secretaries are newly appointed, and the third is an incumbent who had been transferred to Shanxi from Wuhan (Hubei Province) in 1978. Moreover, the governor and four of the five vice-governors are also new.

The limited available biographic information supports Chinese claims of a younger, better educated, and more technically competent provincial leadership.²⁹ The average age of the Shanxi party standing committee dropped from 65 to 55, and the new leadership includes officials with expertise in such areas as economics, mining (in particular, coal), and chemicals, suggesting something about the province's current priorities. Rejuvenation of government leaderships was even greater—with the average age of governor and vice-governors dropping from 65 to 49, and the percentage with university education tripling from 22 to 66. At 50, Governor Want Senhao, formerly an engineer in the Ministry of Coal Industry, exemplifies this trend.

The backgrounds of members of the old leadership had been very different from those of their replacements. The pre-reform provincial party leadership, for example, consisted of 20 individuals—11 secretaries and 9 members of the standing committee of the party committee—most of whom fell into one of two groups. One group consisted of nine individuals who had been Shanxi officials before the Cultural Revolution, under party secretary Wang Qian. Wang, second secretary and governor in 1965, was purged during the Cultural Revolution but returned to power as first secretary in 1975. He remained in office until 1980, at which time he was replaced by Huo Shilian. This first group may be described as the revolutionary generation whose return to power is personified by Deng Xiaoping. The second group consisted of eight officials who gained leadership

²⁸See Wolfgang Bartke and Peter Schier, *China's New Party Leadership: Biographies and Analysis of the Twelfth Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party*, Armonk, NY, M.E. Sharpe, 1985, p. 134.

²⁹Shanxi radio, Mar. 21, 1983, in *FBIS-CHI*, Mar. 22, 1983, p. R/2; *Shanxi Ribao* (Taiyuan), Mar. 22, 1983; Xinhua, Apr. 29, 1983, in *FBIS-CHI*, May 5, 1983, p. R/6; *Shanxi Ribao*, Apr. 30, 1983, in *FBIS-CHI*, May 26, 1983, pp. R/3-4.



Wang Senhao, a senior engineer in the coal industry, who was elected governor of Shanxi Province in 1983.

—EASTFOTO.

positions in Shanxi for the first time after 1978. At least five of these were experienced officials who had been transferred to the province apparently to offset the considerable leftist influence that persisted there despite the reemergence of rehabilitated revolutionary-generation officials like Wang Qian.

Thus, by early 1983, the Shanxi leadership was fairly evenly divided between those who had *regained* power in Shanxi and those, of the same generation, who had been *transferred* to Shanxi by the center after 1978. In terms of authority, the transferred officials, led by the newly appointed first secretary Huo Shilian, the second secretary and governor Luo Guibo, and secretary Ruan Bosheng, seemed clearly dominant. Huo and Ruan were both members of the 11th CCP Central Committee (elected in 1977), the former the minister of agriculture in 1979, the latter a Jilin Province official.

Residual leftist influence in the Shanxi leadership was most prominently represented by Guo Fenglian, a 34-year-old peasant activist who rose rapidly under

Dazhai Brigade leader and CCP Politburo member Chen Yonggui. In 1968, Guo served as Brigade deputy party secretary, when Chen was both Brigade secretary and vice-chairman of the provincial revolutionary committee. Three years later, Guo joined the committee's standing committee, and in late 1973—on Chen's recommendation—he replaced Chen as Dazhai Revolutionary Committee chairman, soon after Chen had gained Politburo membership. During the mid-1970's, Chen and Guo both actively propagated the Dazhai experience through publications, speeches, and personal contacts (in particular, with visiting delegations). Another Shanxi party leader who may also have had leftist leanings was Li Shunda, who first gained public notice as a labor hero in 1946. Li subsequently was a vice-chairman in 1955 (along with Chen) of the Shanxi peasants' association preparatory committee, a "model producer" as a brigade leader in 1966, and a founding member of the Shanxi Revolutionary Committee in 1967.³⁰

The central backgrounds, low prominence, and lack of clear ties to former Shanxi leaders observable in the new leadership selected in 1983, as well as the center's involvement in their selection, suggest that Beijing was concerned primarily with establishing a leadership body that owed allegiance to it. Of the three officials retained from the old leadership body, two had relatively weak ties to the province, at least as far as political loyalties were concerned. Li Ligong, as noted above, served in Beijing for a decade and a half before coming to Shanxi in 1981; Wang Kewen, the new deputy secretary, spent the bulk of his career in Wuhan before being transferred in 1978. Only Wang Tingdong had had continuous experience in Shanxi as a party leader since the early 1970's. But Wang is neither a native of the province (having been transferred there in 1971) nor a leader of formidable stature. Indeed, in the recent reorganization, he was demoted from secretary to standing committee member. Moreover, Wang's past assignments suggest that he is a specialist in agronomy, and therefore he may have been retained for that reason. He ran a conference on agricultural construction in 1976, for example, and spoke at a national science meeting in 1978. Although several members of the new leadership apparently are Shanxi natives, they do not appear to have close links to either the Shanxi revolutionary generation or the leftists.³¹ In sum, an old, experienced team of outsiders appears to

³⁰Two other leaders—Wang Tingdong, a cadre since the late 1950's who was rehabilitated in 1970 and sent to Shanxi in 1971, and Jia Jun, a Shanxi urban youth "sent down" to the countryside, who became a cadre by 1973—are harder to evaluate, but they may also have been leftists.

³¹Even the ties to Huo Shilian and Luo Guibo seem more a function of these leaders' having been transferred by the center at roughly the same time than a function of longtime subordination to Huo and Luo. Li Ligong, Wang Kewen, and Zhang Jianmin are cases in point.

have been sent to Shanxi in 1979–80 to pave the way for a smooth transition from a chaotic situation, in which Cultural Revolution leftists were pitted against rehabilitated revolutionary-generation Shanxi natives, to a united leadership under a new generation of technically trained figures who owed primary allegiance to the center and its predominant goal of economic development.

Shanxi: Revitalizing the Bureaucracy

Beneath this seemingly smooth process, which in retrospect appears to have been so logically planned, lay a far more complex political reality. Judging from the hints in China's public media, this reality included widespread distrust of and opposition to central reforms, the overcoming of which required the application of a vast array of political techniques. Replacing the leadership with individuals more capable, more energetic, and more responsive, while doubtless crucial, was only the first step in a far-reaching effort to restructure and revitalize the regional bureaucracy—an effort that is today still barely out of the starting gate.



Li Dongye, Minister of the Metallurgical Industry, who visited the Taiyuan Iron and Steel Company of Shanxi Province in February 1983.

—EASTFOTO.

The most dramatic and no doubt most effective technique used was direct central involvement. The basic mechanism for such involvement was the work team (*gongzo zu*), which was sent to Shanxi by the Central Guiding Group for Structural Reform (*Zhongyang jigou gaige zhidao xiaozu*). Dispatched there to aid in “revolutionizing, rejuvenating, intellectualizing, and professionalizing”³² the new provincial leadership, the work team set out to ensure that the new leadership would meet with the center's approval. In Shanxi's case, this was the culmination of central efforts over a prolonged period to create a responsive provincial leadership. In fact, the announcement made by the Shanxi Party Committee of the makeup of the new party leadership was no more than a proclamation of the CC's notice, which frankly described the two previous leaders—Huo Shilian and Luo Guibo—as well as the newly appointed party head, Li Ligong, as having been “sent” by the Central Committee.³³ While the details of such direct central interference in provincial affairs tend to be concealed, numerous references to analogous cases exist. On February 10, 1983, for example, Shanxi radio noted that Minister of Metallurgical Industry Li Dongye attended a meeting at which the Taiyuan Iron and Steel Company adopted the contract management responsibility system to improve profits, an approach strongly advocated by the central leadership. Also, numerous references to the activities of discipline inspection groups—which are subordinate to the Central Discipline Inspection Commission (CDIC)³⁴—indicate that this new hierarchy of watchdogs is playing an active role. A Shanxi discipline commission circular in early 1983, for instance, “urged party committees and discipline inspection commissions at all levels to firmly check unhealthy tendencies in housing distribution.”³⁵ A few months later, Secretary Li criticized people for “taking revenge on discipline inspection cadres,”³⁶ who apparently were doing an embarrassingly good job of exposing local corruption.

Another technique employed by central reformers was the holding of meetings to study central documents. This task was backed up by numerous exhortations in the press and carried out through study classes and the use of explanation teams. Following the 12th Party Congress, for example, “party organizations at all levels” in Shanxi were reported to regard the study of the congress's documents as “the cardinal task.” Despite the use of rotating study classes and explanation teams,

³²Shanxi Ribao, Mar. 22, 1983.

³³Shanxi Ribao, Mar. 21, 1983, in FBIS—CHI, Mar. 22, 1983, pp. R/2–4.

³⁴See Mills, loc. cit., pp. 31–32.

³⁵Shanxi radio, Jan. 26, 1983.

³⁶Shanxi Ribao, June 10, 1983.

however, some three months later, in mid-February 1983, Shanxi media were still calling on the people of that province "to wage the struggle on two fronts,"³⁷ that is, to clear away the influence not only of "leftist ideology and the 'two whatevers',"³⁸ but of rightist ideology as well. In another context, Shanxi radio reported that a pilot rectification meeting had "conveyed the important speech of a leading central comrade."³⁹ In brief, even when central representatives were not present, their thoughts were.

A third technique was the use of pilot programs. At the meeting on Shanxi's pilot rectification program, for example, in addition to the speech of the "leading central comrade," cadres also "studied the experiences of pilot project work in Beijing and Heilongjiang."⁴⁰ In keeping with standard CCP practice, following a central decision to implement a reform nationwide, pilot programs were to be launched to test the effectiveness of the center's original conception. This allowed for modifications (perhaps to accommodate local conditions) and, if all went well, provided models for others to emulate. Party rectification, scheduled well in advance to begin in late 1983, involved a great deal of pilot work in Shanxi. An early 1983 forum on pilot rectification projects held by the Shanxi party Organization Department reported that over 200 grass-roots units in 17 departments throughout government, industry, security, universities, and communes had received work groups in late 1982 to "train a backbone force for party rectification."⁴¹

Party leaders at both the central and provincial levels also made considerable use of moral appeals, especially when trying to persuade prospective retirees to step down with a positive attitude. Calling on retirees in terms that became familiar throughout China in 1983, new party boss Li Ligong noted:

Although the veteran comrades are retiring, that does not mean they are not making revolution or working. They may have retired from their jobs, but their thinking cannot retire, and their sense of the revolution and of responsibility for it cannot weaken in the slightest. The old comrades must happily support the work of the new leadership groups with minds at ease. They must truly

³⁷Shanxi radio, Dec. 1, 1982.

³⁸The "two whatevers" refers to the Maoists' attempt to invoke Mao's sacred authority to justify their policies: "Whatever policy Chairman Mao has decided upon, we shall resolutely defend; whatever instructions the Chairman has issued, we shall steadfastly obey." Quoted in Parris Chang, "Chinese Politics: Deng's Turbulent Quest," *Problems of Communism*, January–February 1981, p. 3.

³⁹Shanxi radio, Feb. 25, 1983.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid. Other important reforms also began with pilot work. For example, the experimental reestablishment of township (*xiang*) governments in two communes, enabling reform of the commune system to be "accelerated," was reported to have been completed in early 1983. See *Shanxi Ribao*, Feb. 8, 1983.

*succeed in providing wholehearted and sincere support. Thus, they will be worthy to be called revolutionary veteran comrades and will be caring for the overall situation and thinking of the party's cause.*⁴²

Such appeals were backed up by a wide-ranging, innovative program of inducements to prospective retirees, inducements alluded to by Li in the same speech:

The new leadership groups must care for, respect, and cherish the old comrades. They must genuinely regard them as staff officers, and consult more with them when problems in work crop up.

Between the restructuring of the State Council in spring 1982 and the streamlining of personnel in mid-1983, over 470,000 veteran bureaucrats retired in China.⁴³ Many were allowed continued access to official documents and permitted to attend official meetings.⁴⁴ Others were assigned new duties. In Beijing, for example, some performed public service, forming price and service investigative teams.⁴⁵ Other inducements included retirement with full pay,⁴⁶ continued access to official cars, medical care, and retirees' clubs. A favored few were appointed advisers to the units on which they had formerly been ranking members or were elected to prestigious advisory committees being established at various levels.

Borrowing a page from the more legalistic approach of Western bureaucracies, Deng and his followers also began instituting formal criteria governing the age, tenure, and educational levels of individuals, as well as the size of leadership bodies. A Shanxi organizational work conference, for example, "demanded" that cadres under 50 years of age be given remedial training in order to raise their educational level to that of a senior high-school graduate by 1990.⁴⁷ In his report to the Shanxi Provincial People's Congress Standing Committee in the fall of 1983, Shanxi Governor Wang Senhao illustrated how such new standards were being implemented in his province.⁴⁸ According to Wang, projected structural reform of the provincial bureaucracy, which "was launched on a full scale following the election of new leading members of the provincial government in April," would reduce government work departments from 62 to 38 and trim government personnel by some 42 percent.

⁴²Shanxi radio, Sept. 27, 1983, in *FBIS-CHI*, Sept. 29, 1983, pp. R/1–2.

⁴³Xinhua, Jul. 16, 1983.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Beijing radio, Apr. 23, 1983.

⁴⁶Xinhua, Jul. 16, 1983.

⁴⁷Shanxi radio, Sept. 28, 1983.

⁴⁸Shanxi radio, Sept. 21, 1983, in *FBIS-CHI*, Sept. 23, 1983, pp. R/4–6.

In the 31 departments already streamlined, he noted, the number of leading officials was cut from 245 to 112; moreover, newly assigned personnel were considerably younger (by an average of seven years) and better educated (42 percent versus 13 percent with college degrees) than their predecessors.

Backing up such tactics as personal intervention by central officials, moral exhortations, pilot programs, study classes, inducements, and new legal standards was a final, powerful technique—the use of negative examples. Consider the December 1982 arrest of Huang Ruian, a former member of the Shanxi Revolutionary Committee Standing Committee, a top leadership post during the Cultural Revolution. Expelled from the party and arrested for peddling pornography and committing “many crimes in the economic, political, and cultural fields,”⁴⁹ Huang’s fate exemplifies the threat that hung over cadres who refused to toe the new political line. Coverage of the case by the Shanxi media made clear the political nature of the arrest by linking his crimes to his leftist past, labeling him a factional leader who had “actively” participated in seizing power and persecuting old cadres during the Cultural Revolution:

*It should be noticed that certain rebel leaders and beaters, smashers, and looters of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution period have turned to economic or cultural crime after collapsing politically. They thus continue to confront us. Painful lessons tell us that we must by no means underestimate their capacities and influence. At present, leading comrades in certain units lack vigilance against people of this type. The masses are very worried about this. We hope that the report openly exposing the illegal activities of rebel leader Huang Ruian will sharply awaken these politically color-blind people.*⁵⁰

Such, in brief, could be the fate of cadres with politically suspect pasts unless they wholeheartedly joined the reformist bandwagon. The handful of similar trials held publicly across China in 1982 and 1983, many of which resulted in 15- to 20-year convictions, must have sent a clear message to hesitant cadres.

Hunan: Uneasy Compromise

Hunan Province’s extraordinary continuity of leftist leadership (Hua Guofeng was a party secretary there for 12 or so years before coming to Beijing in 1971) and



Mao Zhiyong, First Secretary of the Hunan Provincial Committee of the Chinese Communist Party.

—New China Picture Company.

post-Mao Zedong record of coolness toward Dengist reforms made it a likely target for a full-scale purge of leadership. Moreover, Hunan’s first secretary, Mao Zhiyong, had made repeated self-criticisms in the month preceding the spring 1983 streamlining. These self-criticisms seemed to make his demise almost inevitable. Yet, although hundreds of provincial leaders throughout China, including a number of first secretaries, lost their positions, Mao survived and remains Hunan’s first secretary to this day. An examination of the reasons for his survival (to the degree that such information can be gleaned from the scattered hints in the public media) will help illuminate the nature of central-regional relations under Deng Xiaoping.

Mao Zhiyong’s reluctance in 1978 to give even pro forma support to the fundamental Dengist slogan “practice is the sole criterion of truth” indicated his disenchantment with and lack of commitment to the extensive reforms then being advocated by Deng and his associates. Indeed, Hunan was one of the last provinces to endorse this code-phrase for pragmatism—an endorsement that took the form of a markedly unenthusiastic statement of support by Mao on December 6 of that year. Judging from the Hunan media commentary in

⁴⁹Shanxi radio, Dec. 11, 1982, in *FBIS-CHI*, Dec. 15, 1982, pp. R/2-3.

⁵⁰Shanxi *Ribao*, Dec. 12, 1982.

1981, the province also had shifted only slowly from leftist agricultural policies—with stress on grain production, egalitarianism, and centralized decision-making—to the Dengist agricultural production responsibility system, which eased restrictions on crop selection and relied on the profit motive to stimulate production.⁵¹ On March 7, 1981, for example, Hunan radio's Commentator criticized the province's leaders for leftist tendencies, accusing them of attempting "to achieve unrealistically high production quotas."⁵² A few days later, the Commentator intensified this criticism, noting that "class struggle" with its stress on egalitarianism and rejection of market forces "was overexaggerated" in Hunan.⁵³

In an apparent effort to adjust to political realities after Hua Guofeng's demotion at the 6th Plenum of the 11th CCP Central Committee in June 1981, the official provincial party daily *Hunan Ribao* published a review of the plenum's landmark reassessment of party history, taking this opportunity to lash out at residual leftism in Hunan.⁵⁴ This was highly unusual given the generally mild reaction to the resolution elsewhere. *Hunan Ribao* charged that the province had been slow to eliminate its "sincere belief in the 'two whatevers'" and had "carried out inappropriate, excessive, and even unfounded propaganda about Comrade Hua Guofeng." "We publicized some of his leftist ideas as correct," the paper continued. "We also put forward certain erroneous slogans such as the 'true light,' with the result that his new personality cult ran rampant in the province for a long time."⁵⁵

First Secretary Mao was personally implicated in this politically suspect stance, not only by virtue of his preeminent authority in Hunan, but also because of his personal ties to Hua Guofeng and because of his earlier self-criticism. Hua, an official in Chairman Mao Zedong's home county of Xiangtan (Hunan), in 1951 became on Mao's recommendation a provincial party secretary there in 1959, and Hunan first secretary in 1970. Mao Zhiyong, who, like Hua, benefited from the leftist policies of the Cultural Revolution, has run the province since 1977. He belonged to a core of Hunan leaders with similar career patterns, suggesting the existence of a tightly knit political force there. At the time of the streamlining, eight of the top 20 Hunan party and government leaders had been provincial officials since before Chairman Mao's death in 1976, five of these since 1970 or earlier—including Hunan's three top leaders, Mao Zhiyong, Second Secretary Wan Da, and Governor Sun Guozhi. Two of the 20, like Hua Guofeng, were former leaders of Xiangtan Prefecture.

Moreover, Mao Zhiyong had admitted complicity in the evolution of Hunan's political stance. In 1981, for example, he took responsibility for Hunan's "leftist

mistakes."⁵⁶ In late 1982 and early 1983, he admitted that his province had failed to measure up to central standards across virtually the full range of Dengist reform policies. On September 4, 1982, at the 12th CCP Congress, he conceded that "our understanding is still very insufficient with regard to the role of education and science in socialist modernization.... Particularly in the selection of ... well-educated and professionally competent young and middle-aged cadres for leading bodies ... we are lagging even farther behind."⁵⁷ At a meeting in Hunan some two-and-a-half weeks later, he made a speech in which he admitted that his province had failed not only to correct injustices committed during the Cultural Revolution but also to implement properly the agricultural responsibility system even after the landmark 11th CC 3rd Plenum in December 1978.⁵⁸ And in a speech in early 1983, he repeated a general self-indictment made in his earlier self-criticism, admitting that "for rather a long period around the time of the third plenary session we did not follow the arrangements of the Central Committee on certain major issues," such as opposing the cult of personality and eliminating leftist influences.⁵⁹

The streamlining in the spring of 1983 left Mao isolated, his closest allies having been removed from power. Of the nine party secretaries subordinate to Mao before the reform, only one—Jiao Linyi, Guangzhou first secretary until his transfer to Hunan in 1980—remains in office. Governor Sun Guozhi was transferred to the less powerful post of provincial people's congress chairman, and six of the eight vice-governors retired. So did Second Secretary and Provincial Party Committee Chairman Wan Da and six PPC vice-chairmen. Moreover, a campaign to bring Hunan into line with central policies on making full use of intellectuals, promoting technical experts in industry, and preventing corruption during bureaucratic reorganization emerged in full force immediately following the streamlining.

That Mao Zhiyong survived in spite of all this is remarkable. It is also instructive. An examination of the center's tactics in dealing with Mao and his

⁵¹On the production responsibility system, see David Zweig, "Opposition to Change in Rural China: The System of Responsibility and People's Communes," *Asian Survey*, July 1983, pp. 879–900.

⁵²Hunan radio, Mar. 7, 1981.

⁵³Hunan radio, Mar. 13, 1981.

⁵⁴In this regard, it is interesting to note that the "Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of our Party since the Founding of the People's Republic of China" essentially blamed Mao Zedong for the excesses that had occurred during the Cultural Revolution. See Article 22 of the Resolution in *FBIS-CHI*, July 1, 1981, p. K/8.

⁵⁵*Hunan Ribao* (Changsha), Aug. 3, 1981.

⁵⁶Beijing radio, Mar. 28, 1981; and Hunan radio, Mar. 28, 1981.

⁵⁷Xinhua, Sept. 4, 1982.

⁵⁸*Renmin Ribao* (Beijing), Sept. 28, 1982.

⁵⁹Hunan radio, Feb. 10, 1983.

unresponsive province reveals a good deal about how the Chinese political system functions under Deng's leadership. One essential point to keep in mind in this regard is that the purpose of the streamlining in Hunan was not so much to eliminate leftist leaders per se as it was to attain certain substantive policy goals, namely the acceptance and promotion of Dengist reforms. Nowhere was this distinction illustrated more clearly than in the center's efforts to rectify the mistreatment of professors at Hunan University.

Hunan: Local Stonewalling

The struggle on the part of Hunan University professors to gain better treatment broke into the open media in June 1982 when Beijing's *Guangming Ribao* published a letter of protest against maltreatment of university professors.⁶⁰ The difficulties these professors would encounter illustrate the problems Beijing has faced in gaining effective implementation of its reforms at the local level because of its need to rely on provincial-level responsiveness. The issue centered on the university administration's attitude toward intellectuals, which was said to reflect Cultural Revolution biases. In the fall of 1982, in response to the letter of protest, party officials in Changsha, Hunan's capital, sent a provincial investigation team to the university to rectify this improper attitude. While at the school, the team instead "conducted a counterinvestigation," the result of which, according to officials at the center, was that "the problems there were even more tightly covered up."⁶¹ Despite First Secretary Mao's public support for the party line calling for better treatment of intellectuals, nothing more was done until the issue reappeared in the central media several months later.

On February 24, 1983, the official CCP daily *Renmin Ribao* published another letter by two Hunan University professors criticizing the university for its continued failure to "reverse Cultural Revolution verdicts" on persecuted teachers.⁶² Mao endorsed the letter, noting that Hunan intellectual policy was still under leftist influence and thus "a prime issue determining whether we can reach political unanimity" with the Central Committee.⁶³ Two weeks later, Liu Xuechu, head of a Hunan work team sent by the CC Guiding Group on Structural Reform, visited the professors and commended them for having had "a great influence on the whole province."⁶⁴

⁶⁰*Guangming Ribao* (Beijing), June 16, 1982.

⁶¹*Renmin Ribao*, May 6, 1983.

⁶²*Ibid.*, Feb. 24, 1983.

⁶³*Ibid.*, Mar. 11, 1983.

⁶⁴Hunan radio, Mar. 31, 1983.



Wang Zhen, member of the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party, visited the Jianxiang Porcelain Factory in Changsha, Hunan Province, in November 1984.

—New China Picture Company.

Himself a former university official, Liu seemed to have been carefully selected as Beijing's man to provide guidance on local treatment of intellectuals. Further central pressure on the university came in the form of a visit in early April by Politburo member Wang Zhen, who stressed the role of intellectuals.⁶⁵

Apparently, Mao personally participated little in the province's dealings with the work team—judging from his failure to figure prominently in media commentary on the issue. This task he left to party Secretary Jiao Jinyi, who brought provincial influence to bear. Jiao accompanied Liu to Hunan University in late March, published an article on intellectuals in the Hunan press in early April, and at an April 19 meeting announcing new leaders of the Hunan Culture Department called for a "new situation in Hunan's cultural work" to eliminate leftism.⁶⁶ By late April 1983, following appointment of the new provincial leadership, the province appeared to be giving full support to Beijing and once again sent a work team to the university.⁶⁷ In addition, provincial leaders established special organs at various levels of government to inspect treatment of intellectuals.

⁶⁵Hunan radio, Apr. 4, 1983.

⁶⁶Hunan radio, Apr. 19, 1983, in *JPRS*, No. 83422, May 6, 1983, pp. 89–90.

⁶⁷Hunan radio, Apr. 29, 1983.

Despite this intense central pressure and apparent support by the province's new leaders, Hunan University officials continued to resist reform. *Guangming Ribao* reported on May 7, for example, that during the two previous months, "the university leadership" had made "only little and slow progress" in redressing mishandled cases, which, according to Liu, still numbered over 900 in early May.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, *Renmin Ribao* was able to announce a narrow victory at this time—namely, the appointment to the university administration of the two professors who had written the letter three months earlier criticizing the university leadership.⁶⁹ Far from being critical of provincial authorities, the paper credited them with responsibility for having resolved a situation caused by a "small number of responsible cadres in the university . . . fending off the implementation of the policy on intellectuals." That Hunan University had been featured in the media for broader purposes was made clear by an announcement the same day that Hunan was conducting a review of its policy toward intellectuals, including over 40,000 teachers, throughout the province.⁷⁰

Even as *Renmin Ribao* spoke of a "breakthrough," however, it admitted that some "responsible cadres" opposed to the party's policy on intellectuals were "thinking of a comeback," causing implementation of the policy to proceed "at a snail's pace." By mid-June, the limited nature of the "breakthrough" was becoming increasingly evident, as some opponents of reform remained powerful enough to influence the local media. Hunan radio, for example, began to portray in a positive light events that had been treated negatively by newly appointed Hunan leaders and the central media.

In May, representatives of the Ministry of Machine-Building, with which the university is affiliated, joined in the work of the provincial work team, but this did not seem to deter provincial opposition to central policy, a point reinforced by commentary on Hunan radio. Toward the end of the month, the center stepped up its efforts. On May 21, *Guangming Ribao* stated that the university's "leading members have not yet corrected the erroneous ideas in their minds,"⁷¹ and on May 26, *Renmin Ribao* criticized the university's continued leftism, quoting Ministry of Machine-Building representative Xu Nianchu as saying that "the issue of Hunan University has become serious."⁷² Interestingly, the official party paper gave no indication that the problem was be-

ing solved. The next day, however, Hunan radio observed that Hunan University personnel had "gradually reached unanimity of opinion" on eliminating leftism,⁷³ a markedly more optimistic evaluation.

Another example of central-regional media disagreement occurred a few days later. A June 3 speech by Jiao Linxi in which he criticized leftism was summarized by Hunan radio as calling leftism a "problem . . . not only at Hunan University but also in some other units."⁷⁴ The central media gave a much more negative assessment in its summary of the speech. According to the *Renmin Ribao* version, Jiao noted that leftism at the university was "very serious" and "quite typical" of general attitudes throughout the province. "Regardless of whether on the economic, political, or cultural front," he is reported to have said, "Hunan is a bit more backward than other provinces in sorting out 'leftist' things."⁷⁵

Hunan: Experts in Industry

That the issue of ensuring a "proper" attitude toward intellectuals encompasses, in the center's view, far more than the academic world was clearly indicated by a May editorial in *Renmin Ribao*, which called on industrial leaders to reward experts for technical achievements and to give them political power as well.⁷⁶ Central figures toured Hunan during the spring to implement just such a policy. During visits to various industrial plants, Politburo member Wang Zhen, who had also earlier visited Hunan University, inquired into the status and role of technicians and stated unequivocally that "we must boldly select, promote, and employ experts and technical personnel."⁷⁷ Although Mao Zhiyong accompanied Wang throughout his visit, the Hunan party leader, as noted earlier, seems to have eschewed the opportunity to lend support publicly to the center's position.

Nevertheless, in the wake of the spring leadership changes and inspection by central representatives, certain symbolic steps to enhance the authority of experts and to make better use of their knowledge were reported. On April 29, with the aid of a provincial investigation team, an engineer who had been mistreated by the officials of a factory in Hengyang City was elected to the city government, and the factory leadership, which included a director of production and technology with only a primary-school education, was reorganized. Point-

⁶⁸*Guangming Ribao*, May 7, 1983.

⁶⁹*Renmin Ribao*, May 6, 1983. See also Beijing radio, May 8, 1983; and Hunan radio, May 6, 1983, in *JPRS*, No. 83539, May 24, 1983, pp. 42-43.

⁷⁰Hunan radio, May 6, 1983.

⁷¹*Guangming Ribao*, May 21, 1983.

⁷²*Renmin Ribao*, May 26, 1983.

⁷³Hunan radio, May 27, 1983.

⁷⁴Hunan radio, June 3, 1983.

⁷⁵*Renmin Ribao*, June 7, 1983, in *FBIS-CHI*, June 8, 1983, p. P/6.

⁷⁶*Renmin Ribao*, May 22, 1983.

⁷⁷Hunan radio, Apr. 4, 1983.

ing out that this case was "by no means an isolated or occasional one," *Renmin Ribao* portrayed the poorly educated leaders of this 100-man factory as consistently discriminating against its 18 university-graduate employees, even driving one in despair to flee to Hong Kong because his quiet efforts to improve technology were taken as a sign of "ideological backwardness."⁷⁸

Again, as in the Hunan University case, exposure of minor local inequities in the central press served a dual purpose. By focusing attention on the case, pro-reform elements were given vital support. Once they had won, their victory became a lesson for all other units in the country with similar problems. Following the victory of the reformers at the Hengyang factory, for example, *Renmin Ribao* did not hesitate to lecture its readers on the lessons they were to learn. "The 'leftist' influence of despising knowledge and discriminating against intellectuals cannot be underestimated," the paper stated. "In order to really implement the policies toward intellectuals, not only is it necessary to solve the ideological problems, but it is also imperative to carry out necessary reorganization. Otherwise, . . . we still cannot prevent the occurrence of similar cases." The article went on to reveal other, similar cases of injustice, and concluded by pointing out ominously that "if the intellectuals continue to be looked down upon, the four modernizations can never be realized."⁷⁹

The leftist Hong Kong daily *Ming Pao* described the case of another engineer who, after making a "technical breakthrough," was fired from his position as head of a technical research group by cadres who "looked down on technology and were jealous of talented people."⁸⁰ Following a visit by CC Secretariat member Gu Mu and newly appointed Hunan Governor Liu Zheng, the engineer was appointed deputy director of his plant, and the plant's party secretary and director were dismissed.⁸¹

Whether or not these steps will prove to be more than tokens remains unclear, however. Surely the high central investment of the leadership's time incurred by sending Politburo and CC Secretariat members to handle individual cases personally cannot be continued indefinitely. As *Ming Pao* observed, such defeats of leftists in Hunan industries remain "rare."⁸²

Hunan: Bureaucratic Corruption

Hunan has also figured prominently in central media criticism of local corruption during the ongoing nationwide bureaucratic restructuring. A CDIC circular in April 1983 calling on all levels to prevent the illegal distribution of public property to individuals by governmental units about to be abolished used Xiangtan Prefecture

as its primary example,⁸³ and several prefectural officials have been disciplined by the provincial party committee for such transgressions.⁸⁴ The rescinding of unauthorized promotions made at lower levels by Hunan's party committee was also reported in the central press.⁸⁵

While central media criticism has been carefully directed at local levels, the provincial party committee was required to submit a report to the CDIC on its handling of the Xiangtan case, suggesting that Hunan's provincial leadership remained under close central scrutiny even after the spring streamlining.

Conclusion

The similarities in the techniques employed by central reformers in the two very different cases of Shanxi and Hunan suggest certain conclusions about the nature of the political system being fashioned in post-Mao China. Unity and stability seem predominant concerns, presumably on the assumption that only these conditions will permit sustained economic development. Veteran central leaders, personally familiar with the effects of Cultural Revolution purges of political opponents, have, judging from the events of 1983, put a great deal of thought into how to remove opponents in a way that will avoid future recriminations. Some were elected to advisory bodies, at times amid considerable fanfare; others were transferred to lesser positions, such as to the vice-chairmanship of provincial people's congresses, where they could continue to hold office but be a step removed from day-to-day administration of government affairs. Even some politically undesirable figures, such as Mao Zhiyong, retained their positions—a strikingly different fate from that of officials in the 1960's, who were publicly humiliated, then summarily fired following their self-criticisms.

The streamlining of provincial leadership in the spring of 1983 and the subsequent reforms at the provincial level and below have also demonstrated a move toward the establishment of a modern bureaucratic system in which the selection, promotion, and retirement of per-

⁷⁸*Renmin Ribao*, Apr. 29, 1983, in *JPRS*, No. 83646, June 10, 1983, pp. 25-27. Such cases formed the background to more general appeals to workers to respect intellectuals, as in the *Renmin Ribao* May Day editorial on May 1, 1983, in *FBIS-CHI*, May 2, 1983, pp. K/19-20.

⁷⁹*Renmin Ribao*, May 1, 1983.

⁸⁰*Ming Pao* (Hong Kong), May 5, 1983.

⁸¹Hunan radio, May 15, 1983.

⁸²*Ming Pao*, May 5, 1983.

⁸³Xinhua, Apr. 25, 1983.

⁸⁴Hunan radio, Apr. 16, 1983.

⁸⁵*Renmin Ribao*, May 20, 1983.

sonnel is based on predictable, clearly stated regulations. The efforts over the past several years to establish limited tenure for high officials, define maximum permissible sizes for leadership bodies, and set minimum qualifications for office will, if expanded and observed in practice, go far toward establishing a predictable system of government with a life of its own, independent of individual top leaders.

Flexibility and forethought have characterized the Dengist leadership's first steps toward developing such a system. In Shanxi, the combination of role models, pilot programs, a variety of study sessions, and media instruction orchestrated in part by a central work team carried the main burden. In the more difficult case of Hunan, a stream of high-level central officials bypassed the provincial leadership and went directly to local sites where, in conjunction with detailed exposés in the central press, they publicized negative examples and resolved local issues with national implications in favor of the reformers.

Nonetheless, despite the decisive Dengist victory at the 12th Party Congress and repeated self-criticism by Mao Zhiyong thereafter, Mao survived the provincial leadership streamlining. Too young to be retired on grounds of old age and no doubt the beneficiary of residual support for Hua Guofeng, Mao also appears to have been too firmly entrenched in Hunan's leading political body to be removed without incurring both a divisive struggle and loss of control over provincial affairs, had the province been handed over to a leadership team lacking any veteran Hunan leaders. The extraordinary unity of the pre-reform Hunan leadership, in contrast to other provinces which often had leaders who had been transferred in by the center or were split by factional contests between Cultural Revolution activists and rehabilitated veterans from the early 1960's, combined with Mao's willingness to admit his errors, at least verbally support the reform program, and acquiesce in the removal of his older allies from the provincial leadership apparently convinced Beijing to give him another chance.

But even the cloud of Mao Zhiyong's continuation in office, while suggesting that real limits exist on the central reformers' ability to compel provincial compliance, may have a silver lining for the reformers. Resistance to compromise during the Cultural Revolution provoked such factional bitterness that it poisons Chinese politics

to this day. Thus, Beijing's willingness to compromise was in itself an important message. To the hundreds of thousands of opponents of reform, Mao Zhiyong indirectly served as a model. They too would be allowed to remain in office, provided they switched to Deng's side and promoted his policies. Just such a message was virtually spelled out in a recent report from another problem province, Guangxi, where the Commentator of the provincial daily defined the party's policy as "leniency for those who confess."⁸⁶ The fact that Beijing was willing to compromise in the cases of Hunan and Guangxi must make the permanent acceptance of Dengist reforms a far less distasteful and less threatening prospect for many cadres, thereby further enhancing the likelihood of political stability in a post-Deng China.

The streamlining of provincial leadership throughout China was implemented in accordance with a schedule that had been publicly announced well in advance. As one step in a long series of reforms that began at the central level in 1982 and reached the subprovincial level in earnest by mid-1983, the outwardly smooth and rapid transfer of provincial leadership was an impressive exercise of reformist power. The techniques employed suggest that Beijing's goal is the establishment of a stable political system led by a unified party operating according to a set of rules that would facilitate the self-replication of an energetic, highly professional leadership on the basis of performance—primarily economic performance. While an ambitious goal that is no doubt ultimately dependent on the rate and nature of economic growth, its short-term prospects have been greatly enhanced by the current leadership's stress on persuasion. As demonstrated by the process now being set up and refined, this system envisions remedial training for uneducated cadres, promotion of educated cadres, and retention of those who have permanently missed out on the chance for education, provided they can and will support reform efforts from this point on. While it is still too early to tell if this ambitious goal will be attained, the historic transfer of provincial authority to a new generation of younger, more professionally competent leaders greatly enhances the likelihood of success.

⁸⁶ *Guangxi Ribao* (Nanning), June 14, 1983.

State and Society in South Yemen

Norman Cigar

The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY or South Yemen) is the only state in the Arab world with a Marxist government. While observers outside the Middle East are primarily interested in the results of the PDRY's policies because of the country's strategic location, Arabs are perhaps more interested in the success or failure of the Aden government's attempts to achieve social mobilization, as some indication of whether a Marxist model of social development has applicability in a traditional Arab environment.

Rapid social change through state intervention has been one of the PDRY government's fundamental goals since the National Liberation Front (NLF) emerged victorious over its rivals in the civil war that paralleled the struggle for independence from Great Britain. Since independence in 1967, the NLF-based regime has become more radical in stages. In 1978, after merging with two minuscule leftist organizations, the NLF was renamed the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), an avowedly Marxist-Leninist vanguard party. However, the "Marxist-Leninist" faction, espousing the creation of a "new society," had already become dominant within the NLF by 1969.¹

The creation of a "new Yemeni man" and of a "new," "rational, socialist" society are seen by the regime as a necessity for its own internal ideological consistency, as well as for securing its legitimacy on a long-term basis

among the country's population. New social values, institutions, and relationships reflecting the new "reality" are to replace the "remnants of the past" based on "bourgeois and feudal" models. South Yemeni dissidents, on the other hand, have claimed that certain aspects of the government's social planning are primarily intended to help the government consolidate and retain power. Regardless of the motivation, the promoting and controlling of rapid change in society is of considerable importance for the PDRY government.

The Soviet Union has consistently prompted the PDRY to follow this path. For example, one Soviet observer, writing in 1978, underlined the imperative for restructuring South Yemen's society:

*The ideological function—consisting of the liquidation of the colonial heritage in the fields of education and culture, and the inculcation of a world view of the ruling classes or social groups in the consciousness of all members of society—is a vitally important activity for a government having a socialist orientation.*²

Similarly, another Soviet observer wrote in 1983:

*It is no secret that the prospects of the revolution depend to a large extent on the shaping of the national self-consciousness, the formation of a new attitude to labor, and the surmounting of tribalism and other remnants of the past and of the influence of bourgeois ideology.*³

¹Fred Halliday, "Yemen's unfinished revolution: Socialism in the South," *MERIP Reports* (New York), October 1979, p. 12.

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²Valeriy Vorob'yev, *Politicheskaya i gosudarstvennaya sistema NDRI* (The Political and State System of the PDRY), Moscow, Nauka, 1978, p. 74.

³Aleksandr Gus'kov, "South Yemen on the Path of Progressive Transformations," *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'* (Moscow), October 1983, pp. 24–28.

Speaking in a more general vein, Karen Brutents, the highest ranking Soviet official specializing in Third World affairs, noted that "the problem of achieving political stability in the liberated countries and the very prospects for successful opposition to neocolonialism" are directly centered on "the task of democratizing social life in its various aspects," (i.e., restructuring society according to a Marxist model). See *Kommunist* (Moscow), No. 3, February 1984, p. 111.