

SS: 2021

JPRS: 5260

18 August 1960

PARTY CONTROL OF COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA

- COMMUNIST CHINA -

By Yu Chang-ch'in Yu Hui-ing

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19980121 180

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PARTY CONTROL OF COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA

✓The following is a full translation of an article entitled "Ch'uan-tang Fu-pao-ti Hsin-fa-chan" (New Developments in the Party Press). This article was written jointly by Yu Chang-ch'in and Yu Hui-ing, correspondents of the Hsinhua News Agency, appearing in Jen-min Jih-pao (The People's Daily), Peiping, 11 June 1960.✓

More than two hundred and sixty journalists have proudly attended the National Conference of Representatives of Advanced Cultural and Educational Workers. Among them were editors, correspondents and announcers of various newspapers, magazines, news agencies and broadcasting systems from the national capital, province and municipalities, special districts and hsien, including representatives of the organizations of non-professional correspondents and writers.

They had collected data and reported to the conference the activity of each news outlet to show that journalism in our country, depending upon the leadership and full strength of the Party, has already become the Party's loyal eyes, ears and tongue, and is an important bridge for daily contact between the Party and innumerable people and a powerful tool for the Party to guide the revolutionary struggle and construction.

"Walking-on-Two-Legs" and "Three-United"

The representative from the Anhwei Jih-pao (Anhwei Daily) reported that from the beginning of 1958, following Chairman Mao's instructions to assign the first secretaries of the Party committees leading roles in promoting news work, Party committees in the provinces, localities and municipalities hsien, communes, factories and mines and colleges and specialized institutions have unanimously organized writing teams under the direction of their respective first secretaries charged with the responsibility of writing news releases, commentaries, articles, and so forth for various

newspapers, magazines, news agencies and broadcasting departments.

The writing teams in the various organizations above the level of the hsien committee alone were estimated to total 182, with 2,354 full - and part-time staff members. Each writing team has from 5 to 10 full-time staff members. Such huge writing armies have come into existence not only in Anhui Province but also in other provinces, cities and autonomous regions. Under the direction of the party committees, these communications organizations are growing rapidly.

In the Pei-ho People's Commune of Meng-chun hsien in Honan Province alone, there are 64 small groups and 428 activists coming from the front lines of laborers, peasants, businessmen, students and soldiers. Under the direction by section and front of the secretaries of Party committees in the commune, they have united in their duties to further the work of news reporting. Since last year, they have reported to hsien newspapers and broadcasting stations all the way up to grade one central newspapers and broadcasting stations. Out of the 3,600 articles submitted, more than 1,170 have been published.

These facts indicate the extreme concern of Party committees at all levels with the press, which provides an incomparably strong mass foundation for our news work. At present, from the national capital to the provinces, cities, special districts, hsien, and even down to the people's communes and industrial and mining enterprises, we have established a tremendous communications network under the immediate direction of Party committees at various levels. This is one step further in implementing the Party's policy of full management of the press during the new period of history.

The Party's full management of the press is a glorious tradition of our Party's news work. Since the founding of our state, especially in recent years following the great leap forward of the socialist revolution and construction, this tradition has made significant headway. At present, in our news work, there have emerged the new phases of "walking-on-two-legs" and "three-united." Among the workers daily engaged in the Party's newspaper business, we have not only an ever-growing army of career press workers but also a large group of specialized and non-specialized correspondents; and many important tasks in connection with propaganda work are jointly accomplished by the Party's leading cadres, career press workers and those people who have already participated in the practical struggle through the "three-united" campaign.

The development of the "walking-on-two-legs" and

"three-united" campaigns not only opens up extremely broad and abundant sources for news reporting but also raises the quality and quantity of newspaper work. As these two campaigns have provided us with varied material, so they become a tremendous vital force in developing news work.

The "two-legs" policy in news work, on the one hand, means the army of professional news workers and the organization of non-professionals. On the other hand, it also means the specialist and non-specialist members of the correspondence and writing teams of the party committees. The "three-united" policy, viewed from the standpoint of news work as a whole, means unity of the leadership of the Party, professional press workers and the tremendous number of correspondents.

In important reports, it means the unity of leading cadres, news workers and masses; in working methods, it is the unity of working, learning and writing. This type of content, as indicated by the meaning of "walking-on-two-legs" and "three-united," is developing through a continual, leaping-forward process. Experiences of news units such as the Kiangsu Hsinhua Jih-pao, the Kiangsu branch of the Hsinhua News Agency and the Shensi Jih-pao have proved that a more penetrating enforcement of the Party's policy of full management of the press tends to more closely unite newspapers with the masses and with actual conditions and to improve the newspapers' organizing, stimulating, criticizing and promoting functions.

The Advocates of the Great Leap Forward

The representative of the Yen-pu Ta-chung-pao (Yen-pu Masses Daily) of Kiangsu Province, which possesses a glorious history of seventeen years, reported to the conference its experience in propagating the general line, the great leap forward and the commune. Taking the work of this newspaper as an example, we see that the Party's full management of the press, "walking-on-two-legs," and "three-united" policies have given news work tremendous strength.

This newspaper, following last year's proposal by the Yen-ch'en local committee of the Chinese Communist Party to "expedite the work in the Kiang-nan area," rallied newspaper editors, reporters and more than six thousand correspondents. With their close cooperation, under the direct guidance of the local committee, it published within the short period of two and a half months twenty related editorials, more than forty articles of various types, more than two hundred write-ups and reports and more than eighty articles on art and literature. Moreover, it also published eleven special

numbers in the form of public discussions to imposingly, systematically and penetratingly propagate among local masses the realization of their historic mission and stimulate their activity.

The new development of the Party's full management of the press has brought about a new outlook for news work and has assured a correct, overall and penetrating realization of the Party's line, plans and policy in news work. In the course of accelerating campaigns for water conservation, agricultural production, output of steel and iron, communization and technological and cultural revolutions, our newspapers, news agencies, and broadcasting departments have always held high the red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought and have wholeheartedly propagated the "three great treasures" -- the general line, the great leap forward and the people's commune, thus becoming the most unshakable, enthusiastic advocates of the socialist revolution and construction.

In reports of their own activities, all the news units which participated in the conference made clear this point. The eastern part of Fukien Province historically has been described as an area of "steep mountains, cold waters, barren lands and poor people." Therefore, the region's "doctrine of backwardness" seriously restricted the thought of the masses for a long time. Under the headline, "The coldness of water fears the heat of the fire in the heart; the height of the mountain is never comparable to the zeal to work; a revolution is needed to end poverty and the barrenness of the land; the red banner of championship flies over the province," the Ming-tung Jih-pao (Eastern Fukien Daily), acting on the instructions of the Party's local committee, emphasized the fact that the output of rice grown in dry fields per unit area in eastern Fukien surpasses that of other unit areas in the whole province. It used this fact to propagate vigorously, continuously and repeatedly Chairman Mao's instructions to adopt "if poor, think of a change" thinking, to criticize the "doctrine of backwardness," to urge the masses to get rid of superstition, to liberate their thought, to encourage them to reflect on their own subjective ability to act, and to quickly change their attitude of despising people because of poverty-stricken conditions. Under the vigorous encouragement of the newspaper, the poor elements in the local village communes began a race with the rich elements. Some of the poor, after working very hard, were able to catch up with or surpass, the rich.

During its great leap forward, the Harbin Jih-pao of Heilungkiang Province created a type of short and vivid "victory news." It speedily published news regarding everyday creations, accomplishments and experiences in local

activities, which were universally welcomed by readers. The writers of such "victory news" were themselves organizers and creators of the accomplishments which they reported and are connected with party organizations or collective advanced units. For this reason, they manifested greater fighting spirit and the capability to encourage others.

The column of "victory news" has already become a battlefield for the activities and contests of various departments and the masses. To put forth such a column in the newspaper is to directly organize useful contests for the people. The Harbin Jih-pao and many other newspapers indicate that the application of the principles of "walking-on-two-legs" and "three-united" to news work has effectively carried out the Party's mass line in the press, has practically established a close relationship with the masses, which was hitherto unknown, and has caused the masses' creative achievements and experiences to be reflected appropriately, accurately and thoroughly in the growth of their own property and wealth.

The Party's Full Management and Use of the Press

In our country, cadres in party organizations of all levels consider the newspaper career a significant part of the Party's activities and news work as one of their own responsibilities, and provide newspaper workers with all kinds of facilities for their enterprises. Various significant reporting tasks are placed under the leadership of the Party and are accomplished by collective wisdom and ability. In comparison with the work of a correspondent who does the reporting all by himself, this method has an unchallengeable superiority.

When the reporters of the Anhui branch of the Hsinhua News Agency visited Pu-yang hsien and wrote about the high production of the crops, the first secretary of the hsien committee called two conferences, which were participated in by the secretary of the hsien committee, the Director of the Department of Agricultural Work, the Director of the Office of the Hsien Magistrate, the Director of the Bureau of Agriculture, the Director of the Bureau of Water Conservation and other cadres-in-charge. The conferences were to discuss and study with the reporters the contents and form of their reports and to organize local government employees to assist in collecting data necessary for the report. Thus the aim of the report was successfully accomplished. In January-April of this year, 40 percent of this branch agency's dispatches sent to the head office of the Hsinhua News Agency and the Jen-min Jih-pao were supplied by the writing teams

in the party committees of all levels.

As a result of the growth of the writing army and communication network under the leadership of the party committees, newspapers and magazines, news agencies, and broadcasting stations have published and broadcast more and more news releases, articles, and commentaries sent by those who have directly participated in and led practical struggles. Thus variety and abundance in newspaper propaganda work was assured and the identification of the intent of the Party with the demands of the masses was made possible. More commentaries and articles dealing with news developments which are relatively difficult to write up have been sent in by non-professional writers -- especially by the cadres of party committees -- and have occupied prominent columns in the newspapers.

The representative of the Jen-min Jih-pao reported that during the first quarter of this year, 40 articles written by the secretaries of the Party committees in various provinces, cities, and autonomous areas were published in his paper -- a gain of 22 articles over the number of articles published during the average season of the last year. More than 70 percent of the editorials of the Lu-ta Jih-pao (Port Arthur and Dairen Daily) of Liaoning Province were written by cadres-in-charge of various departments in the Party committees of all levels. Since these cadres had had abundant experience in practical work, a profound understanding of the Party's plan and policy and direct relations with the masses, therefore the reports and articles they wrote were welcomed by the readers for effectiveness, rich contents and clear and readable style.

In the period of the great leap forward, one of the most important functions of the newspaper is to raise the red banner, to put up the signboard and to tactfully rouse and lead the people to follow advanced examples. The Shansi Jih-pao has made comparatively outstanding achievements in this respect by setting advanced examples for the people of the whole province. This paper set 295 examples in 1958; 420 in 1959; and 149 in January-April of the current year. It also made great contributions by opening a vigorous mass campaign for various firms and businesses in Shansi Province to compete to become "red, industrious, skillful and thrifty."

From the data provided by so many news units, it is evident that Party organizations at all levels and leading cadres not only are being positively engaged in news work but also are using newspapers to direct all activities at all times and in all places. They have recognized news reporting as a significant medium through which to push ahead all kinds

of enterprises. They have used advanced experiences, as reported by the newspapers, to improve work in the areas or departments under their guidance.

The Party's full management of the press has made newspaper work an enterprise of the people and for the people, and has established closest relations with the broad masses, thus paving the way for the people to place their greatest confidence upon news reporting and draw closer to it. When they have difficult problems, they always say, "Well, let's read the newspaper and see what it discloses." When someone does a good thing, the people around him will say, "Let's send a report to the newspaper." Laborers and peasants feel that to miss reading a newspaper for one day is like going to sleep; to miss it for two days is to not know what is going on; and for three days is to find themselves dull and unintelligent. In order to increase production, one has to read the paper every day. When a newspaper or broadcasting station reports on the success of an undertaking, many people from several hundred, or even from several thousand, miles away rush to the scene by train or by plane for observation and study.

The Growth of the Laborers' "News Army"

In the course of carrying out the plan of the Party's full management of the press, the laborers' newspaper army is growing by leaps and bounds. Large groups of cadres, who possess the experience of practical struggle in the revolution, and excellent correspondents, who come from laborer or peasant families, have joined the ranks of professional newspaper workers. The Heilungkiang Jih-pao, the Heilungkiang branch of the Hsinhua News Agency, the Harbin Jih-pao and other news units are now educating and training a group of advanced laborers, who already have experiences in production, a definite cultural standard and profound political awareness, to become editors and reporters. For instance, the Harbin Jih-pao alone has called in two hundred laborers. Many of them had had previous editing and reporting experience and were able to report independently.

At the same time, the original newspaper workers, who have, through rectification, accepted the principle that politics plays a pivotal role in all activities, have carried out the Party's orders, have done things strictly as intended by the Party, and have regularly penetrated the masses and lived with them, in order to accomplish the mission of propaganda and transform their own thinking attitude. In the furnace of the revolution, they have gradually burned away

the poisonous viewpoints of capitalist newspapers and have taken up the weapon of the thought of Mao Tse-tung to become the Party's loyal warriors and the peasants' honest servants.

During the great steel smelting campaign, the reporters of the Tsinghai people's broadcasting station and the Kwangsi Jih-pao were engaged in struggles alongside the blast furnaces with laborers and peasants, wrote touching reports and smelted "red" their own thought. The two reporters of the Tibetan branch of the Hsinhua News Agency, while reporting on the climbing of Mt. Everest by Chinese mountaineers, shared the mountaineers' joys and sorrows. They not only relayed to the people of the world a detailed report on the Chinese victory in conquering the world's highest peak but also climbed to a height of 6,600 meters above sea-level. This is a record hitherto unheard of in the history of Chinese and foreign news reporting on mountaineering.

In his report before the conference, Comrade Lin Feng said: "In both international and domestic class struggles, the newspapers in our country have sufficiently developed a superb fighting spirit and have become more powerful propaganda media for the proletariat and for educating the broad masses with Marxism-Leninism, contemporary science, culture and knowledge." This is the greatest glory and encouragement the Party has given to the news workers, and at the same time it has placed before us a lofty and difficult task. O Comrades fighting on the front of the press! Let's raise the red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought, continue to uphold our glorious tradition of the Party's full management of the press, better develop the usefulness of the Party's propaganda weapon, and permanently become the soldiers and advocates of the Revolution.

END