

**Dates of Meeting:**

6-2-1954 - 10-2-1954

**Type of Meeting:**

4<sup>th</sup> (enlarged) plenum of the 7<sup>th</sup> CC

**Place of Meeting:**

Beijing

**Attendance:**

35 full and 26 alternate members of the CC CCP; main responsible cadres of the party, government, military, and people's groups. 52 non-party members. 9 full and alternate CC CCP members were absent for reasons of health or were otherwise engaged.

Liu Shaoqi presided over this plenum

Mao Zedong was "on holiday" in Hangzhou and did not attend

**Major Agenda Items:**

Purge of Gao Gang and Rao Shushi

**Speeches and Reports:**

**Liu Shaoqi:** ["Report of the Politburo of the CC CCP to the Fourth Plenary Session of the Seventh CC,"](#) February 6, 1954 reviews the work of the Politburo since the [3rd \(enlarged\) plenum of the 7th CC CCP](#) Third Plenum of the Seventh CC CCP; requests the plenum approve the convening of a party conference during 1954 to discuss the outlines of the state's first five-year construction plan and other relevant questions; warns that the party must remain vigilant against the creation of intraparty factions. Liu does not mention names

"exaggerate the role of the individual and emphasise individual prestige. . . They even regard the region or department under their leadership as their individual inheritance or independent kingdom".

"Of the bandits, local tyrants, enemy agents, core members of reactionary political parties and organisations, and leaders of secret reactionary societies that had engaged in counterrevolutionary activities, we killed 710,000 and put 1,290,000 in prison. Of the latter, 450,000 were later released after having served their sentences in full; 840,000 remain under lock and key. Almost 1,230,000 were subjected to checks and surveillance, which have already ceased for 590,000 of these. A total of 640,000 continue to be subjected to checks and surveillance measures"

**Zhou Enlai:** Speech, "Strengthen Party Unity, Oppose Bourgeois Individualism," February 10, 1954: discusses the need to improve inner-party life and party unity in light of the Gao Gang? Rao Shushi affair. "We are against those words and deeds that are harmful to party unity and damaging to the prestige of the Center, but we are not against exchanging opinions that would strengthen party unity and enhance the prestige of the center"

**Chen Yun:** Speech, ["High-Ranking Leaders Must Raise Revolutionary Consciousness,"](#) February 10, 1954: responsibility for maintaining party unity and preventing divisiveness belongs to high-ranking leading personnel.

**Deng Xiaoping** ["CONCEIT AND COMPLACENCY ARE THE ARCHENEMY OF UNITY,"](#) February 6, 1954

**Zhu De** and forty-two others make important speeches

**Documents passed:**

- "Resolution on Strengthening Party Unity" : The report pointed out: "Some cadres and even some senior cadres still do not have enough understanding of the importance of party unity, the importance of collective leadership, and the importance of consolidating and improving the prestige of the central government; quite a few people in the party Some cadres develop an extremely dangerous sense of pride. They get carried away because of certain achievements in their work, forget the humility and self-criticism spirit that Communist Party members must have, exaggerate their personal role, emphasize their personal prestige, thinking that he is the best in the world, he can only listen to flattery and praise from others, but cannot accept criticism and supervision. He suppresses and retaliates against critics, and even regards the region and department he leads as his personal capital and independent kingdom." "As long as this is the case. If people's individualistic sentiments are not resolutely restrained by the Party, they will gradually calculate their status within the Party, fight for power and gain, and develop the activities of small groups until they embark on the evil path of helping the enemy to destroy the Party and split it. ." The report emphasized: The unity of senior responsible comrades of the party and the military is the key to the unity of the whole party. These comrades should lead by example and strive to strengthen the unity of the party. The plenary session exposed and criticized the anti-Party separatist activities conducted by Gao Gang and Rao Shushi at the 1953 National Financial and Economic Conference and the Second Organizational Work Conference, as well as before and after.

- "Communiqué," February 18, 1954: notes that the plenum adopted resolutions approving the work of the Politburo since the June 6-9, 1950, "The "Resolution on Strengthening Party Unity". . . points out that the unity of responsible comrades of the Central Committee and the provincial (municipal) and higher level committees, and of the high ranking responsible comrades in the armed forces, is the key to the unity of the entire Party."
- Third Plenum of the Seventh CC CCP and calling for convening a party conference during 1954

#### Other Decisions and/or Actions:

- Formally approved the Common Program for the Period of Transition, which had been proposed by the Politburo the final formulation calling for the "step by step" implementation of industrialization and socialist transformation

#### Remarks:

1. Mao is on holiday and is absent ([24-12-1953](#)) until march 23, 1954 He want the plenum to be a short one. He wanted to be kept informed at all time. When things should go out of hand
2. (too much criticism) he will intervene and come to Beijing.
3. On April 27, Deng replaced Rao as director of the Organizational Department and, shortly afterward, assumed the even more crucial position of chief secretary of the CCP Central Committee.
4. After Mao's criticism, Liu could not but "redress his fault" in the policy towards capitalism and kept in line with Mao. Liu further made a self-criticism on his "fault" see [15-06-1953 meeting](#)
5. This plenum "exposed and criticized the conspiracy of the Gao Gang - Rao Shushi antiparty alliance" and called on them to admit their crimes, but they refused.  
06-02-1954 Gao Gang self-criticism:  
First . . . my views of comrade Shaoqi are extremely flawed, in which [I] viewed comrade Shaoqi's individual, momentary and unimportant working shortcomings as systematic problems.  
Second . . . I used to discuss my views of comrade Shaoqi with some other comrades, even with non-Central Committee members. This kind of behaviour is against organizational principles and detrimental to Party unity, this is an expression of factionalism, and must be subjected to Party discipline.  
Third, my views of some cadres are biased and lack analysis, [if I think] they are good, then they are very good, [if I think] they are bad, then they are very bad . . . To comrades who had previously made mistakes yet wish to correct themselves, I failed to adopt the attitude outlined by the Central Committee's resolution, "begin from the starting point of unity, through criticism and self-criticism, to achieve the objective of unity." This is wrong as well, and cannot contribute to the goal of party unity.  
Fourth . . . I personally lack the self-awareness due for a Communist party member, and the spirit of self-criticism. [I] love when others talk about [my] achievements instead of shortcomings.  
February 8 Rao makes a self-criticism.
6. Neither one appeared in public after the conclusion of this meeting. After [this] plenary session, the party proceeded to expose and liquidate the crimes of the Gao Gang-Rao Shushi antiparty alliance". The February 1954 [symposia](#) were part of this effort.
7. Peng Zhen had to make a self-examination at this meeting. a self-examination on his clashes with Lin Biao on the north-east in 1945-6 and was ordered to leave the area.
8. The party conference called for at this plenum did not in fact convene until March 21-31, 1955
9. this convocation has been followed by a succession of Party conferences at the lower levels throughout the country to study the CC's report and resolutions and to engage in criticism and self-criticism accordingly. (the Southwest Regional Party Bureau held an enlarged session in mid-March to hear and discuss reports on the plenum's resolution. Thereafter, the Southwest regional or first-grade level organs arranged study of the plenum's documents. Finally, in late August 1954, an enlarged meeting of the Southwest Administrative Committee was convened to discuss how to implement the Central People's Government's decision on abolishing the regional organs and handing over work.)
10. While nothing explicit was openly said about Kao Kang or Jao Shushi, the Fourth Plenum clearly sealed their political defeat
11. Deng volume notes: The Fourth Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party was held from February 6 to 10, 1954, in Beijing. At the session Liu Shaoqi delivered the ``Report of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Chinese

Communist Party to the Fourth Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee" and Zhu De, Zhou Enlai, Chen Yun and Deng Xiaoping also spoke. The session affirmed the achievements scored in all fields of endeavour since the Third Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee, approved the Party's general line for the transition period put forth by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, approved the decision on holding the National Party Conference, and discussed the outline of the First Five-Year Plan and other relevant questions. At the session participants exposed and criticized the plot of Gao Gang and Rao Shushi to split the Party and usurp supreme Party leadership and state power. They also adopted the "Resolution on Strengthening the Party's Unity", drafted at the suggestion of Mao Zedong, which served to preserve and strengthen Party solidarity and unity.

12. Deng notes

The "Draft Resolution on Strengthening Party Unity" was drawn up at the suggestion of Mao Zedong and adopted on February 10, 1954, at the Fourth Plenary Session of the Seventh CPC Central Committee. The resolution comprehensively analysed the situation inside the Party, pointing out that a number of cadres, even some senior cadres, did not fully understand the importance of Party unity and had become very dangerously conceited, and exaggerated their role in the Party. The resolution stressed the importance of strengthening Party unity and pointed out that unity of the Party, the working class, other working people and people throughout the country provided the basic guarantee for victory in the revolution. The resolution held that unity of the entire Party hinged on unity of the Central Committee, unity of the leading comrades at and above the level of provincial or municipal Party committee, and unity of the high-ranking comrades of the armed forces. To strengthen Party unity, the resolution included six regulations for the Party's senior cadres to follow. The resolution stressed the need to fully develop democracy and carry out extensive criticism and self-criticism in order to strengthen Party unity on the basis of Marxism-Leninism.

1. Some have concluded that the regions were suddenly dismantled because the central leaders feared further autonomy in other regions of the sort for which these men were removed "treating their own regions and departments as individual capital and independent kingdoms." However, it is important to be aware that in many ways Kao and Jao, especially Kao, represented quite special cases among the leaders in the regions. First, among the leaders of the six regional areas, only Kao Kang held the top Party position, two top military positions (Military Region Commander and Political Commissar), and top government post in his region. He was also the only regional leader to become a Vice-Chairman of the Central People's Government Council. Also, the distinctive character of the Northeast is relevant: most of the strategic state-owned enterprises were located in Manchuria. Here too were based the railway and naval facilities under joint administration with the Russians; and here was the logistical base and staging area for the Korean War. For these reasons, generalizations probably should not be abstracted from Kao's case.

Moreover, the core of the charges against the two focused on "unprincipled struggle" to seize Party and state leadership power. Kao in particular was said to have laid claim to leadership of "the Party of the revolutionary bases and the army." Also, it is likely that policy disputes centering on alternative strategies of economic development were involved. For Kao and Jao ruled areas where economic development and industrialization had proceeded furthest. In some interpretations, Kao favored giving high priority to his area, the Northeast, and to the increased industrialization which was the strong point in this area. Those who follow this line of argument claim that Mao, opposed to Kao, preferred a more balanced developmental strategy, giving equal or greater weight to other regions and favoring a greater emphasis on agricultural cooperativization as the road to development. These issues also pertain only to the two purged officials, and not to all regional Chairmen.

Finally, an indication that Kao and Jao alone were the targets in dismantling regions (if regions were indeed abolished to demote individuals) is their "promotion" in November 1952. At that time, Kao was appointed as head of the State Planning Commission, the body charged with direction of the First Five Year Plan. Jao was made a member of the Commission and was also named to head the important Organization Department of the Party Central Committee. These new appointments required that the two men take up residence in Peking, leaving their

local power bases behind. It has been suggested that the two may have been brought to the capital as a preliminary move in curtailing their regionally based power. And in fact, charges against the two did surface as early as the summer of 1953. Teng Hsiao-p'ing relates that warnings were first given to Kao and Jao at a National Convention on Finance and Economic Work held at that time.

In short, there is much that set Kao and Jao apart from their colleagues in the regions, and no clue that autonomy in all the regions had reached or threatened to reach dangerous proportions. Chapters Three and Four will trace in more specific detail evidence for the gradual nature of the abolition of regional government, in contradistinction to the notion that regions were suddenly removed in connection with discovery of a Kao-Jao conspiracy. They will also show that, at least in the Southwest, the power of the regional-level administration was diminishing and not increasing with time.

*Regional Government and Political Integration in Southwest China, 1949-1954: A Case Study.*  
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Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yi, Tan Zhenlin 'Report of Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yi and Tan Zhenlin concerning the discussion meeting on the Rao Shushi question' March 1, 1954. A report to Mao