

Notice of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Organizing the Study of Three Documents, Including the Regulations on Punishing Counter-Revolutionaries

Date: February 22, 1951

All central bureaus, major military region party committees and sub-bureaus, provincial party committees, municipal party committees, district party committees and People's Liberation Army party committees at or above the division level:

The Central People's Government promulgated the "Regulations on Punishing Counter-Revolutionaries" on February 21. The regulations and Comrade Peng Zhen's report to the Central People's Government Committee on this issue were published in the newspaper on February 22. The People's Daily also wrote a long editorial entitled "Why it is necessary to resolutely suppress counter-revolutionaries." Please print the above three documents as soon as possible, distribute them widely, and organize cadres and democrats to study them universally, so that the issue of suppressing counter-revolutionaries can be correctly understood by the whole party and the people of the country, and all kinds of wrong ideas can be criticized to achieve the goal of resolutely and thoroughly suppressing counter-revolutionaries.

Zhongyang February 22

Appendix 1: Order of the Central People's Government on the Implementation of the Regulations on Punishing Counter-Revolutionaries (February 21, 1951)

•Appendix 2: (February 20, 1951)

Report by Peng Zhen, Deputy Director of the Political and Legal Committee of the State Council, to the Central People's Government Committee on the Regulations on Suppressing and Punishing Counter-Revolutionaries

Chairman, Vice Chairman, and members:

The issue of suppressing counter-revolutionary activities is now a matter of great concern to the people of the whole country. In the past period, because we have not effectively

implemented the principle of combining repression with leniency in Article 7 of the Common Program, excessive leniency has occurred in many places, which has caused dissatisfaction among people from all walks of life with the people's government.

The people blame us "for being generous and boundless", "some days cannot", saying: "Heaven is not afraid of the earth, but is afraid that the Communist Party will talk about leniency", saying: "The people's government is good at everything, but it is not good to be so polite to bad people, to watch bad people harm the people, and not make decisions for the people". Some workers filled their chests with indignation and asked the cadres: "Look! We competed for months, and the spies were finished; if we didn't suppress them, we wouldn't compete anymore". Some say: "The government is asleep", "I don't even distinguish between friend and foe". Some people say that the government "pacifies traitors and harms the people" "is nothing like a personal government".

The people are fair and intelligent. The people praised the good work done in the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea, the good land reform, the good price and financial stability, and the good urban management and democratic facilities, but they thought it was too lenient towards counter-revolutionaries. Indeed, we haven't done a very good job on this issue in the past, and there was a period when some things were not done well. The problem became even clearer after the American imperialists launched the Korean War.

At that time, the US-Chiang Kai-shek spies and other remaining counter-revolutionary forces thought that the time of their dream "Three World Wars, a counterattack on the mainland" had come and that the US and Chiang Kai-shek would return to restore the monarchy. They arrogantly tore off their usual "disguised repentance" masks, stretched out their heads from their hidden activities underground, carried out various blatant acts of destruction, and openly attacked the people. Spies and bandits plotted to sabotage railway

bridges, destroy factories and mines, burn warehouse funds, openly rob, assassinate cadres, and harass riots, which occurred in many places. Political bandits who have not suffered severe crackdowns and repressions are becoming more active. Some reactionary party members who have long expressed repentance and are willing to obey control have also refused or evaded control in various forms, and have even colluded with reactionary organizations to carry out sabotage activities. At this time, not only did the reactionary Daomen Gang spread rumors and sabotage in various ways and carry out activities against the people's government, but not only in the newly liberated areas, some landlords threatened the peasants with "Chiang Kai-shek came to kill him", undermined land reform, and prepared to welcome Chiang Kai-shek. Even in the semi-old areas where land reform had already been implemented, some landlords "Majestic" who had not been completely defeated also rose up to make calculations against the peasants Threaten farmers to return land, food, livestock, and farm tools, and drive them to move. In some places, counter-revolutionary underground armies were organized in preparation for riots. In some places, entire families of village cadres were killed. Some farmers' association cadres were killed at one time, more than ten people were killed; some farmers' association members in one village were killed, more than forty people were killed; some civilians who were transporting military supplies and food for the People's Liberation Army were killed in whole teams. In Guangxi province alone, more than 3,000 people were killed by cadres of the People's Government. And the bandits there have been more and more over the past period because we don't kill or rarely kill the bandit leaders and habitual bandits. As for the destruction of production, construction, and various material assets by counter-revolutionaries, it is even more difficult to calculate numerically. The rampant nature of the spies and bandits has reached an intolerable level.

This proves that the Kuomintang reactionaries and their accomplices, the lackeys of imperialism, are by no means willing to die because their rule has been overthrown, but are constantly taking advantage of every possible opportunity to attack the people and the people's government with extreme ferocity.

This proves that being broad and boundless is wrong. All evil and unrepentant anti-revolutionary leaders and other elements who continue to carry out counter-revolutionary activities after liberation must not be lenient and must be severely suppressed. Those who should be killed should be killed, those who should be shut down should be shut down, and those who should be controlled should be controlled. We must never be indecisive or condone adultery. This is clearly stipulated in the common program, and it is also what Chairman Mao has repeatedly instructed us to do.

Why did Chairman Mao and the Central People's Government, with such firm and clear policies, develop such a broad and boundless bias? This is because there are many confused ideas among the cadres.

First, after the victory, they were proud and indifferent to the enemy, thinking that so many Chiang Kai-shek bandits' army had been eliminated, the Kuomintang's reactionary rule had been overthrown, and the remaining counter-revolutionaries were nothing special. Therefore, they lost their vigilance and relaxed their repression.

Secondly, some comrades have confused the consolidation and expansion of the people's democratic united front with the issue of resolutely eliminating the remnants of counter-revolution in the struggle against the enemy. They did not understand that the more thoroughly the remnants of the counter-revolution were purged, the fewer factors would sow discord and undermine the united front, and therefore the more the united front

would be consolidated. At the same time, the more consolidated and extensive the united front, the more isolated the enemy became, and the easier it was for the remnants of the counter-revolution to be eliminated.

Some people, fearing a resolute suppression of the counter-revolution, will "cause shock and panic". They couldn't tell who was shaking and who was panicking. Did the spies and bandits cause panic? The purpose of the repression is to eliminate them; they should be shaken and panicked. Isn't this good? What's so scary about this? Are the people shaken and panicked? As long as the people's government does not cause chaos, disruption and killing, as long as it is both "stable" and "accurate", the people can only clap their hands and cheer, and will never panic! What they feared was that the government was magnanimous, indecisive, condoned traitors, and condoned spies and bandits who harmed the people instead of making the right for them.

Some believe that the people have won and should be merciful and magnanimous. Those who say this do not understand that without resolutely eliminating the people's enemies, there will be no people's victory; without resolutely suppressing the remaining US-Chiang Kai-shek bandits, a group of jackals, there will be no people's security and the consolidation of people's victory. Kindness and leniency towards them are cruelty towards the people, treating the great people's revolutionary cause as a joke, and being disloyal to the people. The severity of a criminal's sentence should be determined by the magnitude of their crime. If the crime deserves to be killed, the punishment should be resolutely carried out; if the crime does not deserve to be killed, the punishment should not be carried out. For those who are between those who can be killed and those who cannot be killed, do not kill them either. Only kill those who should be killed and those who must be killed. Important counter-revolutionaries with solid evidence.

Although the occurrence of leniency and boundless bias is due to the various chaotic ideas mentioned above, as Chairman Mao said, the key to the decision lies in leadership.

Since the Central People's Government issued instructions and stepped up its leadership in succession last autumn, various regions have quickly corrected their tendency towards leniency in accordance with the general policy of combining repression with leniency, and have begun to resolutely suppress bandit leaders, habitual bandits, bullies, spies and leaders of reactionary associations who have committed serious crimes and are extremely evil. So the situation changed rapidly. Landlords and bullies who had been counting down to the peasants all bowed down and confessed their sins to them; spies who had come to the place to cause destruction and rampant activities were either shot or imprisoned; many political bandits who had formed a large number of shares were quickly eliminated, or collapsed, surrendered; even Fujian, Xiangxi, Guangxi, Guangdong, Sichuan, Guizhou, Yunnan and other places where the bandits were the most rampant were The revolutionary order has also gradually consolidated. In short, evil spirits decreased and positive spirits increased. When various places resolutely suppressed counter-revolutionary activities and shot down important bandit leaders, habitual bandits, bullies, spies and leaders of reactionary associations, the crowd did not show panic and shock, but applauded like thunder, cheered long live, or set off firecrackers to celebrate. Wherever the correct policies of the Central People's Government are implemented, the masses no longer blame us "there is no way", but praise "the People's Government has its own laws and regulations", "make decisions for the people", and praise "the People's Government has its own policies and methods are good", "it really looks like a personal people's government". However, some places are still not resolute enough in suppressing counter-revolutionary activities, expressing indecisiveness, weakness and incompetence, and continuing to allow spies and bandits to go unpunished, thus incurring the dissatisfaction of the people. We

believe that these places must quickly and thoroughly correct this bias in accordance with the guidelines of the Central People's Government and resolutely suppress all counter-revolutionary activities.

Now, in order to provide cadres and the masses with legal weapons to suppress counter-revolutionary activities, to provide sentencing standards for those who try counter-revolutionary criminals, and to overcome or prevent right-wing and left-wing biases in the resolute suppression of counter-revolutionary activities, there needs to be a regulation to punish counter-revolutionaries. There are also widespread demands from various regions that the Central People's Government promptly promulgate such regulations. Therefore, the Political and Legal Affairs Committee of the State Council, based on the principles of Article 7 of the Common Program, has drafted the "Draft Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Punishing Counter-Revolutionaries", which has been adopted at the 71st State Council Meeting and is now submitted to the Central People's Government Council for review and approval.

This regulation was formulated based on a policy that combines repression with leniency, namely "the most wicked will be punished, those who coerce others will not be questioned, and those who make meritorious contributions will be rewarded". For the leading elements of various counter-revolutionaries, the principle of heavier punishment is adopted for spies who do not repent and continue to carry out counter-revolutionary activities after liberation; for those who are coerced, deceived, or coerced into participating in counter-revolutionary activities by counter-revolutionaries, and for those who participated in counter-revolutionary activities before liberation but whose crimes were not serious and who have indeed repented after liberation, especially those who have made meritorious contributions to the people, The principle of lenient treatment was adopted.

In order to make it easy for cadres to master this regulation, when we drafted it, we strived to solve the problem while avoiding complexity and triviality, so we wrote it in a relatively brief summary.

Please verify whether it is appropriate.

•Appendix 3: February 22, 1951

Why it is necessary to resolutely suppress counter-revolutionaries

Editorial RMRB

“Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Punishing Counter-Revolutionaries”, adopted at the 11th meeting of the Central People's Government Council. The implementation of this regulation will greatly consolidate the democratic dictatorship of our people.

As everyone has seen, the counter-revolutionary forces that the Chinese people have fundamentally defeated are unwilling to die. Bandits, spies, bullies, reactionary secret societies and other counter-revolutionaries lurking on the Chinese mainland are also carrying out counter-revolutionary activities in every possible way. These counter-revolutionaries also dreamed of American imperialism and the arrival of Chiang Kai-shek's remaining bandits “to counter-attack the mainland”. They are also looting and killing, destroying production, and even engaging in so-called “mainland guerrilla warfare”. Such rampant counter-revolutionary activities are something that no revolutionary people can tolerate.

Suppressing counter-revolution is not a stopgap measure, but a fundamental political task that people's democratic countries must be responsible to the people to accomplish. In

explaining the task of the people's democratic dictatorship, Comrade Mao Zedong said: "The people... united under the leadership of the working class and the Communist Party, formed their own country, elected their own government, and imposed dictatorship and dictatorship on the imperialist lackeys, namely the landlord class and the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, as well as the Kuomintang reactionaries and their accomplices who represented these classes, and oppressed these people. Only let them behave themselves, not talk or move around. If you make random remarks, you should be banned immediately and punished. ...Why is there a reason to do this? Everyone knows very well. Otherwise, the revolution will fail, the people will suffer, and the country will perish. "(On the People's Democratic Dictatorship) Comrade Mao Zedong's instructions seem even more correct from the perspective of the unbridled activities of counter-revolutionaries in the past period. It can be said that wherever counter-revolutionary activities exist, it is where the power of people's democratic countries is undermined or simply does not exist. Isn't that the truth? If in a place where bandits and bullies can blatantly kill farmers, members of farmers' associations, and cadres, arbitrarily rob people of their property, and burn their houses, production tools, and products, and the people have nothing to do, then what power does a people's democratic country have here? If this situation exists, how can we say that the people's revolution has been successfully completed? Of course not. On June 6 last year, at the Third Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Comrade Mao Zedong once again pointed out: "The reactionaries of the Kuomintang have adopted the method of bandit guerrilla warfare in several regions of the mainland, inciting some backward elements to fight against the people's government. The Kuomintang reactionaries also organized many secret spies and secret agents to oppose the people's government, spread rumors among the people, attempted to undermine the prestige of the Communist Party and the people's

government, and attempted to alienate the unity and cooperation of all ethnic groups, democratic classes, democratic parties, and people's organizations. Agents and spies once again carried out activities to undermine the people's economic cause, used assassination methods against Communist Party and People's Government staff, and gathered intelligence for imperialist and Kuomintang reactionaries." Therefore, he instructed us: "We must resolutely eliminate all bandits, spies, bullies, and other counter-revolutionaries who endanger the people." This is necessary to protect the interests of the people and the power of the people's state from being undermined. Otherwise, it would not be a democratic dictatorship of the people, and the result would be a terrorist dictatorship of counter-revolutionary bandits, bullies, and spies.

Some comrades do not understand that suppressing counter-revolutionaries is a necessary completion of the people's democratic revolution, but actually believe that after the victory of the revolution, "benevolent government" should also be applied to counter-revolutionaries who do not hate each other. They seem to have forgotten that it was the result of the bloodshed and sacrifice of countless martyrs that enabled our people to overthrow the feudal, bribed, fascist, and reactionary Kuomintang regime and establish a revolutionary regime of people's democratic dictatorship. This is the vast majority of oppressed people rising up to oppress the few oppressors who have long oppressed them in the past. This is how the state power has transformed from an institution of a few oppressors into one in which the majority of the people oppress a few oppressors today. The target of our people's revolution is the small group of counter-revolutionary forces, including the imperialist feudal Kuomintang reactionaries and their accomplices. Revolution and counter-revolution cannot be two separate things. The people have shown leniency to all those who are determined to leave the counter-revolutionary camp and return to serve the people. The boundaries between revolution and counter-revolution are

now becoming increasingly clear. The unrepentant counter-revolutionaries who continue their counter-revolutionary activities now will not die willingly, but must be completely killed, and they must never be allowed to kill the people. All the evil bandits, spies, bully landlords and other counter-revolutionaries used to oppress and humiliate countless kind people. Under their bloody clutches, countless people's families were destroyed and their grievances were not in vain. Now that the people have turned over and are building their own beautiful lives, can we still tolerate these counter-revolutionaries continuing to harass the people and prevent them from living a peaceful life?! Clearly, the "mercy" shown to these unruly counter-revolutionaries is the greatest injustice shown to the people. Comrade Mao Zedong had already said in his article "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship": "We will never be benevolent towards the reactionary actions of reactionaries and reactionary classes. We only apply benevolent government to the people, not to the reactionary actions of reactionaries and reactionary classes outside the people." Our people's country and government must resolutely defend the interests of the people's revolution, and therefore must exercise dictatorship over the enemies of the people and resolutely suppress counter-revolutionary activities.

The liberated Chinese people must not only strive to defend the interests already gained from the people's revolution, but also strive to develop the people's national defense, economy and culture through production and construction, and strive to realize the people's higher interests. However, large-scale construction projects must be carried out under certain conditions. If these conditions are lacking, efforts must first be made to create them. There are many conditions necessary for production and construction, one of the most important of which is to eliminate counter-revolutionaries who undermine the people's cause of construction. Many painful experiences have proven that we cannot or will find it difficult to build without eliminating counter-revolutionaries. Although some of

our enterprises have made great achievements through the active efforts of cadres and workers to improve production management and carry out revolutionary competitions, due to political complacency and lax factory protection, counter-revolutionaries have a gap to exploit and carry out covert harm and destruction, which has caused many cadres and workers to lose the results of their long-term labor production. The Beijing Tramway Company's surprise production of several months ago, only to have more than 50 trams destroyed by spies in a single fire, is an immediate example. Some of our comrades only saw the side of the revolution's victory and their own work achievements, while ignoring the fight against the covert harm and sabotage of counter-revolutionaries. They believed that revolutionary cadres and revolutionary people were the majority, and counter-revolutionaries were only a very small minority, so they did not have to fear the covert harm and destruction of counter-revolutionaries. This understanding is very wrong. Stalin criticized similar erroneous views in his report to the plenary session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on March 3, 1937.

Stalin pointed out: "It is certainly true that there are only a handful of perpetrators, while there are millions who support Bursevik. However, it must not be said that perpetrators cannot cause extremely serious damage to our cause. To cause trouble and carry out covert harm, a large number of people are not needed. To build the Dnieper project, thousands of workers would be needed, but to blow up the project, perhaps only a few dozen people would be needed at most. To win the battle, the Red Army needed several armies, but to destroy this victory on the front line, it only needed a few detectives in a certain army headquarters or even a certain division headquarters who could steal the battle plan and hand it over to the enemy. Building a large railway bridge would require thousands of people, but blowing it up would only require a few. Examples like this are countless." This should arouse the high vigilance of all our cadres and the people. We must

not blindly comfort ourselves and relax our work of suppressing counter-revolutionaries; instead, we should fully understand that only by eliminating counter-revolutionaries can we have the possibility of carrying out large-scale construction. If the counter-revolutionaries have not yet been completely eliminated, and therefore large-scale economic construction cannot proceed smoothly, then we should strive to create conditions to resolutely suppress the counter-revolution as one of the necessary preparations for large-scale construction.

Fighting counter-revolutionaries is a rather long and complex process, and it is unimaginable that it can be accomplished in one morning "by a single battle". The people of our country have stood up in a great and majestic manner, and have been able to develop so rapidly on the political, military, economic, and cultural fronts, gaining an unprecedented reputation around the world. This will, on the one hand, further enhance and consolidate the patriotic enthusiasm of our people, and strengthen the friendship and unity between our people and the people of peace-loving and democratic countries around the world; but on the other hand, The counter-revolutionary forces of imperialism and the Kuomintang gang, defeated by our people's revolution, will inevitably attack and destroy us in even greater despair in their final struggle as they approach death. It is not difficult to understand from this point why there are still sabotage activities by counter-revolutionaries within the great country that our people love.

Has the social foundation of counter-revolutionaries been completely eradicated? No. Land reform had not yet been carried out in many parts of the country, and the landlord class and other feudal forces still existed; in some places, although the feudal forces had been overwhelmed, they were still trying to retaliate. The remnants of the Kuomintang reactionary gang still temporarily occupy Taiwan and are constantly preparing "to land".

More importantly, the forces of imperialist aggression have not yet been eliminated in the world. They are constantly extending the spearhead of aggression and the bloody claws of revenge to us; they are also constantly encouraging the feudal forces within our country to retaliate. In the past, all counter-revolutionary elements who relied on the counter-revolutionary rule of imperialism and the Kuomintang gangs and made a living by oppressing the people could neither arbitrarily control the people and act tyrannically in a country with a people's democratic dictatorship, nor were they determined to transform themselves or become human beings again; these people were still delusional about restoring their past lives, continuing to maintain close ties with counter-revolutionary forces, and carrying out counter-revolutionary activities. Comrade Mao Zedong already told us in his report at the Third Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China: "All these counter-revolutionary activities were instigated by imperialism, especially American imperialism. These bandits, spies, and spies are all lackeys of imperialism." Therefore, we should be highly vigilant on the issue of fighting against counter-revolution. As long as imperialists who oppose the Chinese people continue to exist for a day, counter-revolutionary activities in our country will continue. In Stalin's report cited earlier, he warned his comrades in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union that "there were many other countries—— bourgeois states continued to live capitalist lives and surrounded the Soviet Union, biding their time in order to invade it, break it, or at least weaken it by undermining its power. Our comrades have forgotten this fundamental fact, unaware that it is precisely this fact that determines the basis of capitalist encirclement and relations with the Soviet Union." He listed the facts to illustrate how France during the Napoleonic era, along with Imperial Russia, Germany, Austria, and Great Britain, each sent its own detectives, saboteurs, military saboteurs, and murderers to other countries to carry out assassination, sabotage, and espionage activities. He then cited facts

to illustrate that the same was true on the eve of World War II, between France, Britain, Germany, Japan, and the United States. Then he said: "Excuse me, why should bourgeois countries treat Soviet socialist countries with a softer and friendlier attitude than they treat their own bourgeois countries? Why should they send fewer detectives, perpetrators, military saboteurs, and murderers to the Soviet rear than they send to their own bourgeois countries? What is the conclusion drawn from there? From a Marxist point of view, it would be more correct to make the opposite speculation, that is, shouldn't we assume that the number of perpetrators, detectives, military saboteurs and murderers sent to the Soviet Union by bourgeois countries is two or three times greater than the number they sent to the rear of any bourgeois country? As long as the capitalist encirclement persists, won't it be obvious that there will continue to be perpetrators, detectives, military saboteurs, and murderers sent by foreign detective agencies to carry out activities in our country?" Stalin's insightful analysis is equally applicable in principle to the situation our country is in today.

This tells us that the complete elimination of counter-revolutionaries is not something that can be achieved in a short time, but rather should be estimated enough to be a rather long and arduous struggle. We should estimate that if we do not adopt a resolute and thorough approach in the struggle to suppress counter-revolutionaries, then the destruction of counter-revolutionaries will be difficult to avoid in the future construction and development of our country. This is exactly what Stalin's common aspirations said: "The greater our progress and achievements in the future, the greater the hatred that the remnants of the defeated exploitative class will have for us. They will be more determined to adopt more intense methods of struggle, intensify their efforts to damage the Soviet state, and use the most risky and desperate means of struggle for the final struggle. It should be noted that the remnants of the classes that had been defeated in the Soviet Union were not isolated and helpless; they received direct assistance from enemies outside

the Soviet Union. It would be a mistake to think that the scope of class struggle was limited to the Soviet Union. The class struggle front within the Soviet Union was simultaneously connected to the capitalist countries that surrounded us. On this point, the remnants of the broken classes cannot be left unknown. Because they know this, they will continue their risky and desperate attacks in the future.” However, we, the Chinese people, accept the Soviet experience and should have confidence that as long as we adopt a resolute policy of repression, counter-revolutionary activities will decrease and eventually be eliminated.

Now that we have the “Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Punishing Counter-Revolutionaries” that meet the demands of the general people, we can ensure that we will lead the implementation of the correct policy of suppressing counter-revolutionaries nationwide in the future. Article 7 of the Common Program stipulates: “The People's Republic of China must suppress all counter-revolutionary activities and severely punish all Kuomintang counter-revolutionary war criminals who collude with imperialism, betray the motherland, and oppose the cause of people's democracy, as well as other unrepentant counter-revolutionary ringleaders. For reactionaries in general...if they continue their counter-revolutionary activities, severe sanctions must be imposed.” The regulations on punishing counter-revolutionaries are the embodiment of this program. According to this regulation, not only can we prevent and correct all right-wing or left-wing biases in handling counter-revolutionary cases, but we can also ensure the resolute elimination of all bandits, spies, bully landlords and other counter-revolutionaries who endanger the people, continue to complete the task of my country's people's democratic revolution, and prepare the necessary conditions for my country's future large-scale construction work in order to consolidate the people's democratic dictatorship and protect the long-term interests of my country's people.