

Directive from the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party to the Central China Bureau, East China Bureau, and Northwest Bureau on Implementing News Control over Unregistered Newspapers

Date: June 3, 1949

Comrades Tan Zheng and Tao Zhu's telegram of the 27th has been received and noted.

The Central Committee agrees with your proposed measures (Items 1–5) for exercising news control over unregistered private newspapers. However, Items 6 and 7 need not be publicly announced as control orders. If these newspapers recklessly fabricate rumors, you may, depending on the severity of the situation, issue corrections, publish rebuttals, prohibit sales, or order confiscation. Item 7 may be presented as a recommendation during meetings you convene with newspaper personnel.

In addition, you may now, in accordance with the Central Committee's February 18 directive to all Central Bureaus and Field Committees, promulgate the *Provisional Measures for the Registration of Newspapers, Magazines, and News Agencies*, and instruct all newspapers to begin registration.

Attachment:

Comrades Tan Zheng and Tao Zhu's Proposal on the Regulation of Private Newspapers in Wuhan

Date: May 27, 1949

To the Central Committee:

After the liberation of Wuhan, several privately owned newspapers continued publication. Apart from the two major papers, *Dagang Bao* and *Wuhan Times*, there remain numerous small newspapers and several privately operated news agencies that continue to issue dispatches. The true nature of these newspapers and agencies is still under investigation.

Our propaganda cadres have only just arrived, and we are in the process of taking over those newspapers that require immediate takeover. However, regarding the handling and attitude toward privately managed newspapers, no formal policy has yet been announced.

During this interim period, these newspapers have been publishing unverified news, causing extremely adverse effects. For example, on the morning of the 25th, the *Minlian Bao* issued an *extra edition* proclaiming the liberation of Shanghai by our army, based on intercepted telephone communications between Taiwan and Guangzhou by the local telecommunication office. About a week earlier, another newspaper falsely reported the "liberation of Changsha," "the uprising of Zhang Zhen," and "the uprising of Tang Shengzhi." Some papers have arbitrarily interpreted Party policies or published policy excerpts and advertisements without context.

We have already instructed them to deliver several copies of their daily editions to us, along with bound volumes of the past year's issues for review. In the coming days, we plan to convene a meeting with the heads of these newspaper offices to announce the following news control regulations, which they are to observe. Please advise whether this approach is appropriate.

(1) The use of dispatches from the Central News Agency (CNA) and imperialist countries' news agencies is strictly prohibited.

(2) They are encouraged to adopt Xinhua News Agency dispatches; however, once adopted, such dispatches must be published in full—no additions, deletions, or alterations are permitted.

(3) All military news must come from Xinhua News Agency sources.

(4) All public announcements related to the policies of military, governmental, and institutional bodies under the jurisdiction of the Wuhan Military Control Commission shall be released exclusively by the Wuhan branch of Xinhua News Agency.

(5) Policy documents and writings of the Central Committee and of leading figures of the Chinese Communist Party may be reprinted, but must not be taken out of context or have their titles altered.

(6) Regarding laws and policies of the CCP and governments in the liberated areas, newspapers are not authorized to provide their own interpretations.

(7) In reporting social news, all newspapers must strictly adhere to the general principles of journalism under New Democracy: seeking truth from facts, valuing accuracy, and maintaining accountability to the people.

Tan Zheng

Tao Zhu