

Implementation of Anticorruption Policies in Reform-Era China: The Case of the 1993-97 "Anticorruption Struggle"

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This article analyzes Chinese corruption in the reform era in terms of policy implementation, selecting the "anticorruption struggle" (1993-97) as a case. The author makes two arguments. First, Chinese anticorruption policy witnessed developments both in content and in implementation process. The content of anticorruption policy became clearer and more specific, and institutional supervisory mechanisms played an increasingly important role in implementation. We can confirm the process of institutionalization in the implementation of anticorruption policy. Second, the anticorruption struggle, however, had fatal weaknesses in the implementation process: difficulties in mobilizing local government and party organizations, conflict in terms of policy goals, differences of opinion over anticorruption policy, and factional struggles. Moreover, problems such as the dual leadership of the party and government supervisory apparatuses hampered legal and institutional mechanisms. As a result, anticorruption policy was not successfully implemented in the 1990s.

KEYWORDS: China; corruption; anticorruption policy; policy implementation; anticorruption campaign

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Corruption has been one of the most serious political problems in China in the reform era.¹ The prevalence of corruption has harmed the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), thus becoming a source of political instability. In fact, corruption was one of the main grievances both in the 1986-87 student demonstrations and in the Tiananmen Incident of 1989. Peasant disturbances have occurred almost incessantly since the early 1990s due to the corruption of rural cadres.² In addition, corruption has hindered such economic reforms as the establishment of market mechanisms. The party center's economic policies, in particular, have not been implemented faithfully because of corruption on the part of local government officials and party cadres.³

Consequently, the party center has regarded corruption as a life-and-death matter for the CCP and the state, and has continued to implement anticorruption policies since the early 1980s.⁴ China has witnessed four

¹This article adopts a broad meaning of corruption: the behavior of government officials and party cadres who pursue private gains in ways that violate the state's laws and the party's rules, collectively and individually. In China, the party's rules, as well as laws, work as an important standard to judge whether the behavior of officials is corrupt. For more on the meaning of corruption in China, see Ting Gong, *The Politics of Corruption in Contemporary China: An Analysis of Policy Outcomes* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1994), 3-11; Alan P.L. Liu, "The Politics of Corruption in the People's Republic of China," *American Political Science Review* 77, no. 3 (1983): 604; James T. Myers, "Modernization and 'Unhealthy Tendency,'" *Comparative Politics* 21, no. 2 (January 1989): 196; Wang Bingji and Zhu Jingze, eds., *Dangji guitiao tubiao jixi* (A chart and explanation of party discipline and rules) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1993), 117-18; and Zhongyang jiwei jiancha zongheshi, ed., *Fahui dangzheng jiandu zhengti youshi, geng youchengxiaodi fan fubai* (Developing the strength of party and government supervision, more effectively conducting anticorruption) (Beijing: Zhongguo fangzheng chubanshe, 1995), 166.

²See Richard Baum, *Burying Mao: Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping*, fourth edition (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 202; Yan Sun, "The Chinese Protests of 1989: The Issue of Corruption," *Asian Survey* 31, no. 8 (August 1991): 763; Andrew Wedeman, "Stealing from the Farmers: Institutional Corruption and the 1992 IOU Crisis," *The China Quarterly*, no. 152 (December 1997): 805-31; and Thomas P. Bernstein, "Farmers Discontent and Regime Response," in *The Paradox of China's Post-Mao Reforms*, ed. Merle Goldman and Roderick MacFarquhar (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), 197-219.

³Zengke He, "Corruption and Anticorruption in Reform China," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 33 (2000): 260-69; Sun, "The Chinese Protests of 1989," 768-71; and James Mulvenon, "Military Corruption in China: A Conceptual Examination," *Problems of Post-Communism* 45, no. 2 (March/April 1998): 18-19.

⁴Yang Hongmin, "A Brief Description of the CCP's Anticorruption Struggle since Reform

large-scale anticorruption campaigns in the reform era: "Striking Against Economic Crime" (1982), "Rectification Campaign" (1983-87), "Anti-corruption Struggle" (1988-91), and "Anticorruption Struggle" (1993-97; hereafter "the 1993 ACS"). There is little evidence that these anticorruption efforts have been successful, however. To the contrary, some Chinese scholars argue that corruption actually increased in volume, frequency, and severity in the 1990s.⁵

In trying to uncover why corruption did not lessen in this period, most research analyzes the background and causes of corruption. Several factors are often listed as causes of corruption, including socioeconomic structure, the political system, and cultural characteristics. Without solving problems in these areas, the state would find attacking corruption quite difficult. For instance, during the transition from a planned to a market economy, some government and party officials have illegally pursued private interests. The monitoring capacity of the center (the CCP Central Committee and the State Council) has decreased after the implementation of decentralization policies that have devolved power to local governments and party branches. "Connection" (關係 *guanxi*) culture has only been reproduced and strengthened under the market economy. In this way, existing research emphasizes the spread of corruption in China.⁶

and Opening-Up Policy," *Xuexi* (Study) (Beijing), 1993, no. 12, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi* (Chinese Politics) (Zhongguo renmin daxue shubao ziliao zhongxin), 1994, no. 2: 93-94; Zhonggong zhongyang jilü jiancha weiyuanhui, "Work Report of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection to the CCP's Fifteenth National Congress," in *Zhongguo gongchandang shiwuci quanguo daibiao dahui wenxian huibian* (A collection of the CCP's Fifteenth National Congress documents) (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1997), 91, 104; Xian Qi, *Lianzheng Zhongguo* (Clean government of China) (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1997), 19-28, 55-60, 367-424; and Luo Chongmin, "A Preliminary Analysis of the Current Anticorruption Phenomena," *Zhonghua hun* (Chinese Spirit) (Beijing), 1998, no. 5, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1998, no. 5:68-77.

⁵Sun Fuhai, "A Research on the Present Corruption and Socialist Supervision System," *Beijing shehui kexue* (Beijing Social Science), 1995, no. 2, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1995, no. 6:67-68; Yang Jiliang, *Fubai lun* (On corruption) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1997), 457-59; Luo, "A Preliminary Analysis of the Current Anticorruption Phenomena," 83-85; and Chin Pingqi, "An Analysis of the Prospects for Clean Government in China," *Shehuizhuyi yanjiu* (Research on Socialism) (Wuhan), 1996, no. 2, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1996, no. 6:99-100.

⁶Liu, "The Politics of Corruption," 602-23; Connie Squires Meaney, "Market Reform and Disintegrative Corruption in Urban China," in *Reform and Reaction in Post-Mao China: The Road to Tiananmen*, ed. Richard Baum (New York: Routledge, 1991), 124-42; Jean C.

In contrast, this article analyzes Chinese corruption in terms of policy implementation. To understand the prevalence and continuance of corruption despite the CCP efforts to eradicate or at least control this economic malfeasance, we need to examine both anticorruption policies and the background and causes of corruption. In the absence of socioeconomic transition, corruption has been rife in the Third World. Hong Kong and Singapore are thought to have successfully reduced corruption, even though they share Chinese culture and are not considered democratic in the Western sense. Thus to investigate corruption in China, we need to consider several factors—that is, not only socioeconomic structure, the political system, and cultural characteristics, but also anticorruption policy, and party and state supervisory institutions that are established as a result of policy implementation. This study therefore covers issues not included in existing research by concentrating on the background, causes, and impact of corruption.⁷

In order to examine anticorruption policy implementation in the reform era more closely, this article focuses on the 1993 ACS, which has been the most thorough anticorruption campaign in the post-Mao era. This author examines three aspects of the 1993 ACS: the policy's content, methods of implementation and development, and implementation problems. Based on these three areas of interest, this article makes two arguments.

First, both the content and implementation process of Chinese anti-corruption policy developed in the 1990s. As the content was clearer and more specific than earlier attempts, there was less room for local government and party officials to intervene during policy implementation. In addition, although the party center used the campaign method, legal and institutional mechanisms played an important role in policy implementa-

Oi, "Partial Market Reform and Corruption in Rural China," *ibid.*, 143-61; Yufan Hao and Michael Johnston, "Reform at the Crossroads: An Analysis of Chinese Corruption," *Asian Perspective* 19, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 1995): 121-36; and He, "Corruption and Anticorruption," 248-56.

⁷There are of course exceptions. For example, Manion examines corruption control in post-Mao China. See Melanie Manion, "Issues in Corruption Control in Post-Mao China," *Issues & Studies* 34, no. 9 (September 1998): 1-21.

tion. The implementation of anticorruption policy thus became more institutionalized.

The second argument is that the 1993 ACS had fatal weaknesses in its policy implementation process: there were difficulties in mobilizing local government and party organizations, party and government supervisory apparatuses did not function properly, the party's leaders and factions were not in unison over anticorruption policy, and policy goals conflicted. As a result, anticorruption policy was not successfully implemented and the party center failed in its attempts to alleviate corruption in the 1990s.

This article is structured as follows. The first section investigates the characteristics of anticorruption policy in terms of policy content and context. This outlines the analytical perspective that this research uses to examine the 1993 ACS. Based on this perspective, the article then examines the content, process, and effectiveness of the ACS. The final section analyzes the problems of the 1993 ACS. We learn what problems exist, and how they have affected the implementation of anticorruption policy in the reform era.

The Characteristics of Anticorruption Policy

Generally speaking, various factors affect policy implementation: the scope of affected interests, the characteristics of implementing agencies, the level of available resources and elite attention, the clarity and complexity of policy, and monitoring capacities.⁸ Among these factors, policy content and context—the sociopolitical environment in which policy is implemented—are most important.⁹ In this section, this author explains why these factors are key, and how they are useful for analyzing the imple-

⁸David M. Lampton, "The Implementation Problem in Post-Mao China," in *Policy Implementation in Post-Mao China*, ed. David M. Lampton (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1987), 4.

⁹Merilee S. Grindle, "Policy Content and Context in Implementation," in *Politics and Policy Implementation in the Third World*, ed. Merilee S. Grindle (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1980), 11; and Peter S. Cleaves, "Implementation Amidst Scarcity and Apathy: Political Power and Policy Design," *ibid.*, 281.

mentation of Chinese anticorruption policy from this perspective.

Policy Content

New policies affect established interests or power structures, and policy implementation can damage the vested interests of certain groups. Thus these groups resist implementation, and the success of a policy usually depends on the capacity of policymakers and implementing agencies to control resistance. Because setting the content of anticorruption policy is difficult, quite possible is that this policy will be implemented poorly or even fail.

First of all, anticorruption policy aims to control the activities of local government and party officials who further private interests illegally or quasi-legally. These officials are thus more likely to resist or hinder policy implementation. In addition, the central leadership and local cadres view corruption differently. The central leadership is concerned that corruption will cause political instability and damage the party's legitimacy, while local cadres give priority to their private interests and local economic development. Thus the lower levels may pay only lip service to anticorruption policy implementation. In fact, many leading local government officials have implicitly resisted implementation of, or held a passive attitude about, anticorruption policy.¹⁰

In addition, anticorruption policy (such as government restructuring and cadre retirement policies) is an encompassing and nonallocative policy, and there are some difficulties in its implementation process. The center has greater discretion and control over the decision and implementation of these types of policy, while local governments and party cadres have less.¹¹

¹⁰Zhongyang jiwei yanjiushi, ed., *Wunian jinji wunian sisuo: Shisida yilai fan fubai douzheng huigu* (Five years of attack, five years of thinking: A retrospect on anticorruption struggle since the CCP's Fourteenth National Congress) (Beijing: Zhongguo fangzheng chubanshe, 1997), 57-58.

¹¹Chung classifies policies into three categories based on three factors: (1) the number of policy targets (encompassing/selective), (2) the extent to which the policy entails resource allocation (allocative/nonallocative), and (3) the degree to which the policy departs from the status quo (radical/routinized). The more encompassing a policy is, the more restrictive is local discretion. Nonallocative policy may require much higher and stricter compliance on the part of the locals mainly because policy implementation is simply a matter of compliance and, therefore, is more likely to be dictated by political value. See Jae Ho Chung,

As a result, the party center finds difficulty in inducing local government and party organizations to actively implement these policies. In the case of anticorruption, government departments and party organizations have issued close to four hundred regulations since the early 1980s; these regulations have not been fully implemented, however.¹² Moreover, because government-restructuring policy had repeatedly failed since 1978, the Chinese government undertook "the seventh restructuring project" in 1998.¹³ The party overcame corruption in the area of cadre retirement policy only after revising its specific content and implementation methods in the 1980s.¹⁴

Policy Context

The level of policymaker resources and ability to mobilize implementing agencies (mainly bureaucrats) is also important in policy implementation. In this respect, we must consider the sociopolitical environment—the context in which policy decision-making and implementation occur. Despite some decentralization of power in the reform era, the party center has maintained the ability to mobilize local government and party organizations, and properly implement policy.

The decrease in the center's decision-making discretion has been positively correlated with the increase in the ability of local governments to influence policymaking and implementation. As a result, the center and local governments negotiate and bargain fiercely, and policy is usually decided and implemented in this process. Examples of this "fragmented authoritarianism" model include the implementation of economic policies

"Studies of Central-Provincial Relations in the People's Republic of China: A Mid-Term Appraisal," *The China Quarterly*, no. 142 (June 1995): 504-6.

¹²Yang Shuang, "Anticorruption: The Situation is Serious and Awaiting Reform," in *1996-97-nian Zhongguo fazhan qingguang yu qushi* (China's development and trends in 1996-97), ed. Weng Jieming et al. (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui chubanshe, 1997), 88.

¹³Liu Zhifeng, ed., *Diqici geming: 1998-nian Zhongguo zhengfu jigou gaige beiwanglu* (The seventh revolution: A memorandum on the reform of China's government structure in 1998) (Beijing: Jingji ribao chubanshe, 1998).

¹⁴Melanie Manion, "The Behavior of Middlemen in the Cadre Retirement Policy Process," in *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Decision-making in Post-Mao China*, ed. Kenneth G. Lieberthal and David M. Lampton (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1992), 216-44.

in such areas as budgetary arrangements, allocation of resources, and the location of economic projects.¹⁵

The party center can still encourage local government and party organizations to implement anticorruption policy, even though this capacity has clearly weakened since the early 1980s. The "fragmented authoritarianism" model is appropriate for some social and economic policies but does not apply to areas such as education, cadre retirement, and military policy—not to mention political campaigns like anticorruption struggles.¹⁶ In addition, the party center can still check whether local government and party organizations faithfully implement policy.¹⁷ Therefore, the question of whether or not the party center can mobilize local government and party organizations for anticorruption policy is not pertinent; what matters is the *degree* to which and *how* the party center mobilizes these local organizations. These questions are directly related to the methods that the party center uses to implement anticorruption policy.

Since the beginning of the reform era, the party center has used two methods to carry out anticorruption policy: the campaign method and the institutionalized method (the latter of which involves state and party supervisory institutions).¹⁸ The campaign method allows the party center to mobilize ordinary citizens and party members on a large scale at various levels to implement a certain policy in a limited period of time. The party center frequently used this method in the pre-reform era: there were seventy-six campaigns from 1949 to 1979.¹⁹

¹⁵Lampton, "The Implementation Problem," 18-19; and Kenneth G. Lieberthal and Michel Oksenberg, *Policy-making in China: Leaders, Structures, Processes* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988), 3-4.

¹⁶Kenneth G. Lieberthal, "The 'Fragmented Authoritarianism' Model and its Limitation," in Lieberthal and Lampton, *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Decision-making*, 1-30.

¹⁷Huang argues, contrary to conventional wisdom, that the monitoring capacity of the center has not weakened even in regard to economic policy implementation. See Yasheng Huang, *Inflation and Investment Controls in China: The Political Economy of Central-Local Relations during the Reform Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 89-126, and "Administrative Monitoring in China," *The China Quarterly*, no. 143 (September 1995): 825-43.

¹⁸Zhongyang jiwei xuanjiaoshi, ed., *Sikao yu duice* (Reflection and countermeasures) (Beijing: Zhongguo fangzheng chubanshe, 1997), 292-94.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 293.

The party center has also used state and party supervisory institutions to implement anticorruption policy since the early 1980s. There are seven "supervisory systems" (監督系統 *jiandu xitong*) in China: the party, the government, the people's congresses, the judiciary (人民法院 *renmin fayuan*, 人民檢察院 *renmin jianchayuan*), the democratic parties (民主黨派 *minzhu dangpai*), the mass media, and the people.²⁰ Of these, party and government supervisory institutions have played an important role in the implementation of anticorruption policy. The National People's Congress (NPC 全國人民代表大會) and local people's congresses have played stronger roles since the early 1990s in supervising governments at various levels, and by doing so have helped the party center to implement anticorruption policy.²¹

The Content of the 1993 Anticorruption Struggle

The content of anticorruption policy has developed in the reform era. The 1993 ACS was designed more specifically and clearly than earlier campaigns in order to curtail the intervention of local government officials and party cadres during the policy implementation process. The ACS concentrated on the types of corruption over which ordinary citizens expressed dissatisfaction—such as enormous corruption scandals related to leading officials, and notorious cases of corruption usually committed by middle- and lower-level officials.

The party center had to consider at least two aspects of the content of anticorruption policy in the 1993 ACS. The content needed to be specific and clear, so that implementation would, unlike earlier campaigns, be successful. "Middlemen"—local government officials responsible for policy

²⁰Hu Xiumei et al., eds., *Quanli jiandu lun* (On power supervision) (Beijing: Zhongguo min-zhu fazhi chubanshe, 1996), 84-87.

²¹See Young Nam Cho, *China's Political Reform and National People's Congress: The Transformation of Structure and Roles in the Reform Era (1978-98)* (Seoul: Nanam Publisher, 2000) (in Korean), 339-404, and "The Oversight Activities of China's Local People's Congresses in the Reform Era," *Korean Journal of International Relations* (in Korean) 40, no. 2 (2000): 129-45.

interpretation and implementation—exert considerable influence on the success of implementation. If the policy is ambiguous and inconsistent, and policy goals conflict, middlemen tend to arbitrarily interpret and implement the center's policies in a way that furthers their interests, so policy cannot be implemented well.²² To counter this problem, the party center designed the ACS's content so specifically that middlemen could not execute the policy arbitrarily.

The party center also needed effective and strong anticorruption policy for political propaganda. After solidifying its authority at the CCP's Fourteenth National Congress in 1992, the new Jiang Zemin (江澤民)-centered leadership took the initiative by promulgating the 1993 ACS. The public was particularly upset over the alleged corruption among leading party cadres, including the "princelings" (太子黨 *taizidang*). Thus the new CCP leadership wanted clear policy results from the 1993 ACS in order to win public confidence.²³ In addition, the party center needed a timely and effective anticorruption policy in order to implement economic readjustment policies that began in 1993.²⁴

The content of the 1993 ACS considered most of these issues. The policy concentrated on "three core tasks" (三項重點工作 *sanxiang zhongdian gongzuo*). The first was "anticorruption self-purification" (廉潔自律 *lianjie zilü*), which targeted leading cadres above the county and division level (縣處級 *xian/chu ji*). The party center considered controlling the corruption of leading cadres necessary in order to reduce complaints about corruption, and also to lessen corruption among cadres at the lower levels. The center prepared detailed regulations that defined clearly what leading cadres were not allowed to do. This clear articulation meant that local government officials and party cadres had fewer chances to arbitrarily interpret and implement the content of anticorruption policy. For example, 1993's "Five-Article Regulations" (五條規定 *wutiao guiding*) specifically banned leading cadres and their families from participating in entrepreneurial ac-

²²Manion, "The Behavior of Middlemen," 216-44.

²³Baum, *Burying Mao*, 385, 387.

²⁴Bruce Gilley, *Tiger on the Brink: Jiang Zemin and China's New Elite* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1998), 207.

tivities, from accepting paid honorary positions, from stock-trading, from receiving gifts and securities while serving in public positions, and from accepting memberships of and visiting luxurious entertainment establishments. The party center thereafter issued 1994's "New Five-Article Regulations," and "Four-Article Regulations" and "Complementary Four-Article Regulations" in 1995. In 1997, the center also issued "Rules on the Integrity of CCP Leading Cadres," which encompassed previous regulations and rules.²⁵

The second area on which the 1993 ACS concentrated was thorough investigation and treatment of "major and important cases" (大案要案 *da'an yao'an*) involving leading cadres, judicial institutions, and governmental economic and financial departments. The party center emphasized that the party "should resolutely punish corrupt cadres according to the CCP's rules, administrative regulations, and laws," and "should never fail to punish cadres who intervene and disturb investigations, regardless of their status."²⁶ The public had been cynical about the will and capacity of the CCP to implement anticorruption policy because only middle- and lower-level cadres were being punished. The party center therefore stressed that the CCP would severely punish leading cadres involved in corruption scandals. The number of leading cadres who were punished did in fact increase during the 1993 ACS. For example, the party punished 972 county-level cadres in 1993, with the figure rising sharply to 2,153 in 1995, while the number of prefecture- and bureau-level (地廳級 *di/ting/ji*) cadres punished rose from 64 to 128 during this same period.²⁷

²⁵The CCP Central Committee and the State Council, "Decisions on the Recent Anticorruption Struggle Work," in *Shisida yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian (shang)* (A selection of important documents since the CCP's Fourteenth National Congress, vol. 1), ed. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1996), 416-17; and the CCP Central Committee, "Some Guidelines on Clean Government for CCP Leadership Cadres" (For trial implementation), in *Zhongguo gongchandang jilü chufen tiaoli (for trial implementation) xuexi wenda* (Questions and answers for the study of the CCP discipline measures) (Beijing: Zhongguo minzhu fazhi chubanshe, 1997), 333-36.

²⁶The CCP Central Committee and the State Council, "Decisions on the Recent Anticorruption Struggle Work," 417; and Wei Jianxing, "Deepening Work, Thorough Conducting, and Endeavoring to Get New Achievement in Anticorruption Struggle," *Qiushi* (Seeking Truth) (Beijing), 1995, no. 4, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1995, no. 4:75.

²⁷Huang Xiurong and Liu Songbin, eds., *Zhongguo gongchandang lianzheng fanfu shiji*

The third area was to correct the "unhealthy vocational tendencies" (行業不正之風 *hangye buzheng zhi feng*) of middle- and lower-level government officials and staff of related organizations. This included collecting illegal or quasi-legal fees (三亂風 *sanluanfeng*), extortion, and wasting or misappropriating public funds.²⁸ These were the forms of corruption most visible to ordinary people, and as such have caused great dissatisfaction. Of these, imposing excessive levies on peasants was considered to be one of the most serious problems. In fact, there were about thirty large-scale rural disturbances in 1993 due to excessive levies.²⁹ Therefore, in 1993 the CCP Central Committee and the State Council was forced to issue a new "decision" in order to lighten the burden on peasants once again.

The Process of the 1993 Anticorruption Struggle

Although the CCP Central Committee adopted the campaign method in the 1993 ACS, government and party supervisory apparatuses played an important role in the policy's implementation. The policy can thus be called a "quasi-campaign" method. The most apparent characteristic of the 1993 ACS in terms of policy implementation was that implementation was institutionalized even for political campaigns like anticorruption.

The CCP conducted three large-scale anticorruption movements before the Cultural Revolution (1966-76): the "Three Anti's" (三反 *sanfan*) and "Five Anti's" (五反 *wufan*) in 1951-52; and "Socialist Education" and "Four Clean-Ups" (四清 *sìqīng*) in 1962-65. These campaigns had three common traits, being top-down and concentrated, and including mass mo-

(Achievements of the CCP's clean government and anticorruption) (Beijing: Zhongguo fangzheng chubanshe, 1997), 443; and Liu Xi, "1995 Retrospect of the Chief of the Anti-corruption General Office," *Zhongguo shehuibao* (China Society) (Beijing), January 30, 1996, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1996, no. 2:51.

²⁸The CCP Central Committee and the State Council, "Decisions on the Recent Anticorruption Struggle Work," 417-18; and Zhongyang jiwei xuanjiaoshi, *Sikao yu duice*, 112-13.

²⁹Zhongyang jiwei and Jianchabu zhifa jianchashi, eds., *Zhifa jiancha lilun yu shijian* (The theory and practice of law enforcement supervision) (Beijing: Zhongguo fangzheng chubanshe, 1997), 171.

bilization. First, the party center took the initiative in terms of content and methods of implementation, forced local government and party organizations to implement anticorruption policy, and monitored execution (i.e., top-down). Second, mass organizations, the military, and the party and governments at all levels worked together on these campaigns in order to accomplish the center's objectives within a limited period of time (concentration). Finally, the party center mobilized ordinary people to implement anticorruption policy through mass conventions and criticism of suspected party cadres (mass mobilization).

The center also adopted the campaign method in the 1993 ACS, albeit in a different method than in the past, as will be explained below. The character of the 1993 ACS was top-down and concentrated. The party center declared the start of the 1993 ACS, and decided the policy and its methods of implementation at the second plenary session of the CCP Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI 中共中央紀律檢查委員會) in August 1993. During the ACS, the center monitored provincial party committees, who in turn monitored county party committees. Notably, the party institutionalized the implementing-responsibility system, an institution by which local government and party organizations took responsibility for implementing anticorruption policy at their level and one level below (下管一級 *xiaguan yiji*).³⁰ In addition, the priority of objects shifted from the higher to lower levels: from province- and ministry-level cadres (省部級 *sheng/bu ji*) in 1993 and 1994, to county-, township-, and section-level cadres (縣鄉課級 *xian/xiang/ke ji*) in 1995.³¹ Finally, the party center formed ad hoc organizations composed of party and state organ leaders to take charge of the 1993 ACS in local party organizations.³² In contrast to the pre-reform period, mass participation shifted from direct and collective

³⁰Sun Fei and Zhang Bowen, eds., *Dangfeng lianzheng jianshe zerenzhi jianghua* (Speeches on the responsibility system for building clean party work style and integrity) (Beijing: Hongqi chubanshe, 2000), 109.

³¹Zhongyang jiwei jiancha zongheshi, *Fahui dangzheng jiandu zhengti youshi*, 16-17; and Wei Jianxing, "Further Strengthening Anticorruption Struggle," *Qiushi*, 1996, no. 4, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1996, no. 4:97.

³²See Zhongyang jiwei jiancha zongheshi, *Fahui dangzheng jiandu zhengti youshi*, 50, 94. For specific regional cases, see Zhongyang jiwei yanjiushi, *Wunian jinji wunian sisuo*.

mobilization to indirect and individualistic denunciation in the 1993 ACS, as expressed in the slogan, "Rely on the masses, but not mass movements" (依靠人民群众, 不搞群众运动).³³ The party center recalled the bitter experiences of the Cultural Revolution, and feared that mass mobilization could affect economic reform and development. However, mass participation is indispensable to anticorruption policy because exposing corruption is difficult. In fact, public denunciations and informing taken together launched and finished 60-80 percent of corruption cases that the CDI and government supervisory departments (such as the Ministry of Supervision in the State Council) investigated.³⁴ Clear is thus that the party center encouraged the public to participate in the ACS. For instance, government and party organizations established information centers and telephone hot-lines, and rewarded and protected informants through special ordinances.³⁵

The roles of party and government supervisory institutions distinguish the 1993 ACS from anticorruption campaigns in the pre-reform era. Specifically, the party center employed different institutions according to the three areas of policy. For example, the center used the party's internal institutions for "anticorruption self-purification." Leading cadres above the county level had to attend "democratic life meetings" (民主生活會 *min-zhu shenghuo hui*) at least twice a year, where they reviewed their efforts both to implement the party's line and policies and to observe party rules and democratic centralism. In 1990 and 1997, the party center issued stricter rules for "democratic life meetings."³⁶ Leading cadres had to hold special "democratic life meetings" targeted at anticorruption policy. At these meetings, the cadres had to perform self-criticisms regarding how they have followed the party center's rules. If these lower-level officials did not correct problems themselves, then the CDI would investigate and

³³See Jiang Zemin, "Strengthening Anticorruption, Making Progress in Building Party Work Style and Integrity," in *Shisida yilai*, 409; and the CCP Central Committee and the State Council, "Decisions on the Recent Anticorruption Struggle Work," 419.

³⁴Huang and Liu, *Zhongguo gongchandang*, 387; and Xian, *Lianzheng Zhongguo*, 363-64.

³⁵Xian, *Lianzheng Zhongguo*, 22, 26, 314-15.

³⁶Wang and Zhu, *Dangji guitiao tubiao jixi*, 179; and Zhonggong zhongyang zuzhibu zuzhiju, ed., *Jiguan dangde jianshe gongzuo zhinan* (A guide on the work of party building in institutions) (Beijing: Dangjian duwu chubanshe, 1997), 8-12, 42-7.

punish violators.³⁷

In addition, CDI and government supervisory departments investigated "major and important cases." The CDI and government supervisory departments organized special inspection groups and held investigations. Afterwards, these groups reported the investigation results to their superiors. In particular, the party center sent special groups to inspect corruption cases involving leading cadres (such as the bribery scandal involving Chen Xitong 陳希同 and Wang Baosen 王寶森 in 1995) or specific regions (such as Jiangsu Wuxi Xinxing Company's 江蘇無錫新興實業公司 illegal fund-raising in 1994 and the Xiamen 廈門 smuggling scandal in 2000).³⁸ In 1995, the CDI and government supervisory departments at all levels investigated 199 "major and important cases," and the CCDI and the Ministry of Supervision investigated 20.³⁹

The CDI and government supervisory departments also took responsibility for correcting "unhealthy vocational tendencies." Party and government supervisory apparatuses had to directly check and correct the inappropriate work styles of middle- and lower-level government and party officials. The party reviewed law enforcement (執法檢查 *zhifa jiancha*) on a large scale after the center had established law enforcement sections (執法檢查室 *zhifa jianchashi*) in the CDI at various levels in the early 1990s. For example, the CDI and government supervisory departments at all levels examined about 16,000 cases of law enforcement nationwide, and corrected around 527,000 problems in 1993 and 1994. At the same time, they investigated around 32,000 corruption cases and punished about 12,000 cadres.⁴⁰

³⁷Li Yufu and Liang Xisheng, "Advocating Anticorruption and Integrity Received World-wide Attention," *Dangdai shijie yu shehuizhuyi* (Current World and Socialism) (Beijing), 1995, no. 4, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1995, no. 11:56-57; and "Three Years of Anti-corruption, Most Splendid in 1995," *Zhongguo jiancha* (China's Procurator) (Beijing), 1996, no. 2, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1996, no. 4:91-92.

³⁸Xian, *Lianzheng Zhongguo*, 367-442.

³⁹Zhongyang jiwei and Jianchabu zhifajianchashi, *Zhifa jiancha lilun yu shijian*, 142.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 73.

Evaluation of the 1993 Anticorruption Struggle

Evaluating the success of any policy is not always easy,⁴¹ and anticorruption efforts are no exception. Generally speaking, the 1993 ACS failed to obtain the expected results (the elimination or alleviation of corruption), although the policy made some progress.

Even though acknowledging some problems, the party center held that the ACS achieved great results.⁴² Table 1 shows that the 1993 ACS was conducted far more thoroughly than anticorruption campaigns in the 1980s, and the number of party members heavily punished greatly increased. About 220,000 party members were disciplined, and another 34,000 were expelled in the Rectification Campaign (1983-87), while the figures for the 1993 ACS were 670,000 and 122,000, respectively. Thus clear is that the party implemented anticorruption policy more resolutely in the 1990s than in the 1980s.⁴³

There is a caveat to these statistics. An increase in heavy punishments does not necessarily mean that corruption was alleviated; possible is rather that the CCP executed anticorruption policy more resolutely than before. On the contrary, increases in the quantity and severity of punishment were perhaps simply the result of increased corruption. In fact, one Chinese researcher points out a "contradictory phenomenon" (悖反现象 *beifan xianxiang*)—that corruption became more serious and widespread despite the CCP's strong anticorruption policy.⁴⁴ Moreover, the cases exposed could merely be the tip of the iceberg. Corruption is mostly committed in secret and is thus hard to expose. Therefore, the number of punished party members does not represent the actual scope of corruption.

The most important achievement in the 1993 ACS was not the increased number of party members punished, but the specification and

⁴¹Lampton, "The Implementation Problem," 5-7.

⁴²"Work Report of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection to the CCP's Fifteenth National Congress," 91.

⁴³This is supported by the fact that the number of corruption cases prosecuted by people's procuratorates at all levels increased in the 1990s when compared to the 1980s. See Manion, "Issues in Corruption Control," 19.

⁴⁴Zhongyang jiwei yanjiushi, *Wunian jinji wunian sisuo*, 11.

Table 1
Party Members Investigated and Punished for Corruption in the 1980s and 1990s

Period	Investigations*	Number Punished/Kind of Punishment/Status
12th (1983-87) Rectification Campaign	NA	Party members disciplined: 217,967 Party members expelled: 33,896 Party members punished according to criminal code [#] : County and division level: NA Prefecture and bureau level: NA Province and ministry level: NA
13th (1987-92) Anticorruption Struggle	About 875,000	Party members disciplined: 733,543 Party members expelled: 154,289 Party members punished according to criminal code [#] : County and division level: 16,108 Prefecture and bureau level: 1,430 Province and ministry level: 110
14th (1993-97) Anticorruption Struggle	About 731,000	Party members disciplined: 669,300 Party members expelled: 121,500 Party members punished according to criminal code [#] : County and division level: 20,295 Prefecture and bureau level: 1,673 Province and ministry level: 78

Notes:

*Corruption cases investigated by the party commissions for discipline inspection at various levels.

[#]Party members prosecuted and punished by the people's procuratorates and people's courts at various levels.

Sources: Huang Xiurong and Liu Songbin, eds., *Zhongguo gongchandang lianzheng fanfu shiji* (Achievements of the CCP's clean government and anticorruption) (Beijing: Zhongguo fangzheng chubanshe, 1997), 331-32, 407; Zhongyang jiltujiancha weiyuanhui, "Work Report of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection to the CCP's Fifteenth National Congress," in *Zhongguo gongchandang shiwuci quanguo daibiao dahui wenxian huibian* (A collection of the CCP's Fifteenth National Congress documents) (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1997), 93.

clarity of anticorruption policy and changes to the implementation process. As stated above, the party center issued regulations that clearly describe corrupt behavior and standards for punishment, and the top controlled local government officials and party cadres according to these regulations. In addition, the center used government and party supervisory apparatuses to implement anticorruption policy, instead of mobilizing the masses and

encouraging them to publicly attack cadres suspected of corruption.

There is little evidence to suggest, however, that corruption lessened in the 1990s despite the 1993 ACS. The Chinese public seemed to agree with the party's arguments that corruption actually increased in volume, frequency, and severity in that period.⁴⁵ The CCDI said at the CCP's Fifteenth National Congress in 1997: "Generally speaking, there is a great difference between present anticorruption work and the party's and public's expectations," and "our party's struggle against the phenomenon of corruption is a political struggle on which the party's and state's destinies depend." The party had therefore to carry out the anticorruption struggle more resolutely in the future.⁴⁶ In sum, since corruption was not alleviated despite a strong anticorruption policy, many felt that there were serious problems in the policy implementation process.

Problems in the Anticorruption Policy Implementation Process

The success of anticorruption policy ultimately depends on the degree to which local government and party officials faithfully implement policy. In this respect, there were serious weaknesses in the 1993 ACS, since local officials were not committed to implementing anticorruption policy. In particular, leading party cadres above the county level attended "democratic life meetings" but these meetings did not have the desired effect of eliminating corruption through greater self-control and self-purification. In some cases, the CDI and government supervisory departments could not investigate corruption cases thoroughly due to the intervention of leading party cadres. Many middle- and lower-level officials also ignored party center regulations; these cadres kept collecting illegal or quasi-legal fees by changing the name of the levy, and wasting and misappropriating public funds.⁴⁷

⁴⁵Yang, "Anticorruption," 74, 88.

⁴⁶"Work Report of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection to the CCP's Fifteenth National Congress," 102, 104-10.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 101-2; Ying Zi, "Nationwide Anticorruption Struggle Gets its First Achievement,"

The poor implementation of anticorruption policy in the 1993 ACS mainly resulted from policy *context* rather than *content*. First of all, as the localities' interests began to differ sharply from those of the center, the party center found mobilizing local government and party officials to be difficult. The party had similar problems during the Rectification Campaign (1983-87).⁴⁸ These challenges had mainly resulted from China's decentralization policy, which was conducted from the early 1980s. That policy allowed local government and party officials who contributed to regional economic development to obtain a greater degree of economic (higher revenues) and political (promotions) benefits than before. Thus these officials concentrated on regional economic development and tended to ignore or selectively implement central policy steps that conflicted with their vested interests. In this way, the bigger the difference between the interests of the center (maintenance of the party's power and political stability) and local governments (economic development), the more difficult the party center found mobilizing local party cadres to implement any policy that did not improve local interests.

This problem is prevalent in cases of "collective corruption" (集體腐敗 *jiti fubai*), where all government departments and party organizations in a region or a sector are corrupt. Collective corruption includes "extra-budgetary finance" (預算外資金 *yusuanwai zijin*), "small coffers" (小金庫 *xiao jinku*), collection of illegal or quasi-legal fees, waste and misappropriation of public funds, large-scale smuggling, and tacit approval of the production of fake goods.⁴⁹ Cadres feel almost no sense of guilt in collective corruption because, in their view, such activity seeks to boost regional

Dangjian wenhui (Party Building Collection) (Shenyang), 1994, no. 1, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1994, no. 2:87; and "The Fifth Anticorruption Work Conference of the State Council Held," *Zhongguo jiancha*, 1997, no. 2, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1997, no. 4:78-79.

⁴⁸Hsi-sheng Ch'i, *Politics of Disillusionment: The Chinese Communist Party under Deng Xiaoping, 1978-89* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1991), 195.

⁴⁹Dai Ran, "Small Collectivism: The Hotbed of Passive Corruption," *Dangjian yanjiu* (Research on Party Building) (Beijing), 1994, no. 9, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1994, no. 10:6-7; Chen Jianxin, "Collective Corruption: New Type of Current Corruption," *Datequ dangfeng* (Party Work Style in Big Special Economic Zones) (Haikou), 1997, no. 6, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1997, no. 9:102-4; and Yang, *Fubai lun*, 223-25.

economic development rather than private gain. Local government and party officials cannot eliminate collective corruption because such activity links these two groups tightly together. Also difficult is for supervisory apparatuses such as the CDI to investigate collective corruption because the government and party organizations in that area will try to protect suspected officials. The anticorruption policy implementation process involves these phenomena of "local protectionism" (地方保護主義 *difang baohu zhuyi*) and "sectoral protectionism" (部門保護主義 *bumen baohu zhuyi*).⁵⁰

Problems related to party and government supervisory institutions also had a negative influence on the implementation of anticorruption policy. One such serious problem was the "dual-leadership system" (雙重領導體制 *shuangchong lingdao tizhi*) of supervisory apparatuses. Specialized supervisory organizations (such as the CDI or government supervisory and auditing departments) received directions from both their superior organizations (垂直領導 *chuishizhi lingdao*) and the government and party organizations to which they belonged (橫向領導 *hengxiang lingdao*). For example, both the CCDI and provincial party committees directed provincial CDI; and the Ministry of Supervision (State Council) and provincial governments directed provincial supervisory departments. Therefore, supervisory bodies had to consider the party organization and government to which they belonged when implementing anticorruption policy, regardless of the party center's direction. The dual-leadership system thus weakened the independence of supervisory apparatuses and hindered their efforts to resolutely implement policy.⁵¹

Third, factional struggles and differences of opinion within the party over anticorruption policy weakened the 1993 ACS. Local government and party officials passively implemented such directives if central leaders

⁵⁰Zhonggong zhongyang zhengfa weiyuanhui yanjiushi, "Resolutely Enforcing Law, Thoroughly Erasing Local and Sectoral Protectionism," *Fazhi ribao* (Law Daily) (Beijing), May 2, 1997, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1997, no. 5:70-71; and Yang Minzhi, "Oppose Corruptive Protectionism," *Liaowang* (Outlook Weekly) (Beijing), 1997, no. 31, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1997, no. 8:103-5.

⁵¹Jianchabu faguishi, ed., *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo xingzheng jianchafa shiyi* (An explanation of the PRC's administrative supervision law) (Beijing: Zhongguo fangzheng chubanshe, 1997), 101; and Hu, *Quanli jiandu lun*, 173-74.

themselves were not united over the policy, as was the case during the Rectification Campaign (1983-87). At that time, reformers (as Zhao Ziyang 趙紫陽 and Hu Yaobang 胡耀邦) and conservatives (such as Chen Yun 陳雲, Hu Qiaomu 胡喬木, and Peng Zhen 彭真) had serious differences of opinion about the causes of and countermeasures to corruption, and the extent of the anticorruption campaign.⁵² These differences also resulted in the factional struggle and downfall of Hu Yaobang in 1987.⁵³ For this reason, the Rectification Campaign could not produce the expected anticorruption policy results.

The CCP also had internal differences of opinion regarding the 1993 ACS, although less so than at previous times. The conservatives regarded the introduction of capitalist elements (such as the market economy, individualism, and materialism) as the causes of corruption, and supported the maintenance of socialist elements and the ideological struggle against capitalism. Some even thought that anticorruption policy was a class struggle between the working and capitalist classes.⁵⁴ In contrast, reformers argued that corruption resulted not from the introduction of the market economy but from its *underdevelopment*, and urged more radical reform.⁵⁵ Jiang Zemin took a position between these two poles of opinion, stating that corruption resulted from both the introduction of capitalist elements and the remnants of feudalism (the conservative position), and also from the effects of the transitional system (the reformist position).⁵⁶ Factionalism also played a role in the 1993 ACS. For instance, some people suspect

⁵²Richard Levy, "Corruption, Economic Crime and Social Transformation Since the Reform: The Debate in China," *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, no. 33 (January 1995): 9-20; Gong, *Politics of Corruption*, 136; and Ch'i, *Politics of Disillusionment*, 188-89.

⁵³Baum, *Burying Mao*, 174-78.

⁵⁴Jiang Nanchun, "Why the Phenomenon of Corruption Occurs," *Zhenli de zhuiqiu* (Pursuit of Truth) (Beijing), 1995, no. 10, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1995, no. 11:62-65; and Zheng Tianxiang, "On Anticorruption," *Qiushi*, 1995, no. 13, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1995, no. 7:68-80.

⁵⁵Wu Jinglian, "Establishing Equal and Competitive Market Economic Order, Erasing the Origin of Widespread Corruption," *Makesizhuyi yu xianshi* (Marxism and Reality) (Beijing), reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1994, no. 1:103-7; and Hu Angang and Kang Xiaoguang, "Terminating Corruption by Institutional Renovation," *Gaige yu lilun* (Reform and Theory) (Beijing), 1995, no. 3, reprinted in *Zhongguo zhengzhi*, 1995, no. 5:69-75.

⁵⁶Jiang, "Strengthening Anticorruption," 405-7.

that the 1995 Chen Xitong bribery scandal was a result of cooperation between the Jiang Zemin faction and the Qiao Shi (喬石) faction to exclude the Beijing faction.⁵⁷

Finally, anticorruption policy came into conflict with economic development during the 1993 ACS, to the detriment to anticorruption policy implementation. Local government officials and party cadres were passive about implementing any policy that conflicted with their priorities. The party center had considered economic development policy as top priority since the early 1980s, and usually promoted anticorruption policy as an economic readjustment measure adopted in order to resolve problems (such as overinvestment, speculation, and inflation) caused by economic overheating. For example, economic overstimulation and illegal speculation in Guangdong (廣東) and Fujian (福建) were the main reasons that the party center launched 1982's "Striking Against Economic Crime" campaign. Hyperinflation and nationwide hoarding in the first half of 1988 forced the party center to launch an anticorruption struggle and economic readjustment policy in late 1988. As stated earlier, the 1993 ACS was not an exception. Therefore, we can say that anticorruption policy has tended to conflict with economic development policy in the reform era.

Deng Xiaoping (鄧小平) raised the "two hands" theory in regard to this policy conflict: the CCP should firmly implement both reform and opening-up policy on the one hand, and policies to reduce corruption and economic crime on the other. Jiang Zemin reiterated this stance.⁵⁸ However, if the "two hands" were to come into conflict, which should the party support more firmly? From the inception of the 1993 ACS, the party center emphasized that the ACS should contribute to economic development, even though the CCP would pursue both policies simultaneously.⁵⁹ Thus the party would give priority to economic development in case of any conflict with the fight against corruption. Local government and party officials welcomed this interpretation which gave them an excuse for not faithfully

⁵⁷Gilley, *Tiger on the Brink*, 242-46.

⁵⁸Jiang, "Strengthening Anticorruption," 404.

⁵⁹The CCP Central Committee and the State Council, "Decisions on the Recent Anticorruption Struggle Work," 418.

implementing anticorruption policy.⁶⁰

Conclusion

This article has analyzed the implementation process of anticorruption policy in the 1990s, focusing on the content, process, and problems of the 1993 Anticorruption Struggle. Chinese anticorruption policy witnessed progress in both content and implementation process. The content of policy was clearer, which helped to reduce the possibility of arbitrary implementation on the part of local government and party officials. Legal and institutional mechanisms played a considerable role in the implementation of anticorruption policy, even though the party center still used the campaign method in the ACS. In other words, policy implementation was institutionalized even for political campaigns like anticorruption.

However, the 1993 ACS revealed problems in the policy implementation process. Apart from the inherent problems of implementing policy by the campaign method, there were other serious problems: the difficulties in mobilizing local government and party officials, the inability of party and government supervisory institutions to function properly, differences of opinion and factional struggles within the party, and conflicting policy goals. Because of these problems, the 1993 ACS failed to achieve its goal of alleviating corruption.

The seriousness of corruption has implications for China's future political reform. If corruption increases and threatens political stability, the party center may launch political reform that is more radical in nature. The CCP has conducted political reform mainly to stimulate economic development. This type of reform has included the functional division of party and government (黨政分開 *dangzheng fenkai*), the division of government and enterprises (政企分開 *zhengqi fenkai*), government restructuring, reform of personnel management systems, and decentralization. However, serious corruption since the late 1980s has encouraged political reform such as the

⁶⁰Zhongyang jiwei yanjiushi, *Wunian jinji wunian sisuo*, 74-75.

direct election and democratic management of village committees, the strengthening of local people's congress supervisory activities, an official shift from "rule by law" to "rule of law" at the CCP's Fifteenth National Congress, and more recently, experiments with direct and quasi-direct elections of township-level government leaders (1998 and 1999).⁶¹ If the CCP remains unable to control corruption, the party may be motivated to conduct further reform. Predicting the scope and character of such future reform would be difficult, however.

⁶¹Huang Weiping, ed., *Zhongguo jiceng minzhu fazhan de zuixin tupo* (Recent breakthroughs in the development of China's grass-roots democracy) (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2000); and Shi Weimin, *Gongxuan yu zhixuan: Xiangzhen renda xuanju zhidu yanjiu* (Public elections and direct elections: Research on the township-level people's congress election system) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2000), 335-453.