



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on October 15, 2013

## China's "Journalists" Ordered to Take New Propaganda Training

Reporters, editors, and commentators for China's mushrooming domestic and global print, broadcast, and social media have been ordered to pack their bags and head back to school for a new and revised dose of Marxist Propaganda 101. On October 10, China's State General Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film, and Television, which is overseen by the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) Central Propaganda Department, announced a mandatory three-month training program for all journalists, according to reports from various Asian and Western news agencies.



"The move suggests greater government control over media and flies in the face of expectations that it was allowing greater freedom," noted a [report](#) in the *Times of India* on October 11.

The *Times* story further noted:

Chinese media training involves courses on patriotism and journalists in the program are required to wear military uniforms on certain days. Currently, media organizations have [a] separate training program for their staff.

Now, the government has created a unified training program, which will be provided free. Journalists need to pass a post-training examination to obtain [a] press card or accreditation. The training will focus on six subjects, including theories on socialism with Chinese characteristics, the Marxist view on journalism, journalistic ethics, laws and regulations, norms in news gathering and editing, and content on preventing false information.

Yes, the People's Republic of China (PRC) is undergoing another wave of "reform," as new CCP leader and Chinese President Xi Jinping reasserts firm Communist Party authority over all aspects of Chinese society, particularly emphasizing CCP control over business, media, and the Internet, which CCP officials claim have been deviating from party doctrine.

New Tang Dynasty Television ([NTDtv](#)), an independent, New York City-based global Chinese television network that regularly tackles the party line dished out by the PRC's larger state-run propaganda organs, reported on the new media control mandate in a story entitled "[New Press Pass in China Makes Training in Marxism Mandatory](#)" (see video below), carried on its regular "[China — Forbidden News](#)" segment.

The NTDtv report reproduces Communist Party Propaganda Department documents and interviews former leading journalists/propagandists/censors who expose the standard practices employed in the PRC's media to tightly control all "news" to assure that it adheres to and serves the state and the CCP party line.



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## **Censors Break Ranks, Expose CCP Media Straightjacket**

In January of this year, a major media controversy rocked China over the censorship of *Southern Weekly*, a newspaper in Guangdong Province that had developed fame for its independent investigative reporting. The paper's journalists went on strike after Tuo Zhen, the province's propaganda chief, heavily censored the paper's New Year's edition. The controversy was stoked to incandescent levels when Zeng Li, the proofreader at the Propaganda Department, published details of the department's censorship instructions in his blog post. The posting spread like wildfire across the Internet before the Propaganda Department's censors could wipe it out.

The international Committee to Protect Journalists reported on Zeng Li and the *Southern Weekly* censorship [here](#), and Freedom House reported on the same [here](#).

In his exposé of the very government agency for which he had worked for many years, [Zeng Li stated](#):

Since the new minister assumed office in May 2012, the control of *Southern Weekly* and *Southern Metropolis Daily* became unprecedentedly strict. There were so many bans. The ministry even told *Southern Weekly* to clear the topics selected for each issue ahead of time. Reporters were not allowed to interview anyone or write anything until it approved the topic. Important reports and editorials were published only after the ministry reviewed them.

*The Epoch Times* [published this list](#) of some of the restrictions put in place by the CCP's Propaganda Department, as translated and summarized by *Apple Daily*:

1. Do not interview, report on, or comment on news involving Bo Xilai, former secretary of the Chongqing City Commission, and Wang Lijun, former deputy mayor of Chongqing.
2. Many brands of liquors are suspected to contain plasticizer. Use the press release from Xinhua and downplay this news.
3. In Guangshan County, Henan Province, 22 students were injured in a stabbing incident. Use the press release from Xinhua, but don't put it on the front page.
4. Some buildings in Foshan City used sea sand as a component of the building materials. Do not interview anyone or comment on this news. [It is illegal to use sea sand that is not desalinated as construction material. The sea salt corrodes the reinforcing steel and destabilizes a building.]
5. There are pictures circulating on the Internet about Xi Jinping visiting Guangdong Province and staying in a hotel. Do not use them.
6. Do not reprint or report on the affair of the director of the Central Compilation and Translation Bureau.
7. Only do short reports on the corruption case of Qu Jianguo, former director of the Zhuhai Branch of China Guangfa Bank.

Zeng Li, who died in March, is only one of many Propaganda Department censors who have posted the department's interminable censorship guideline updates, but he is the best known, as most of the others have posted anonymously to avoid retaliation from the Communist Party officials.

In a May 16, 2013 piece posted on the [www.seeingchinared.com](http://www.seeingchinared.com) website, Gao Yu, a famous persecuted journalist who spent five years in Chinese prisons for bucking the censors, has brought to light an important 2008 speech by Liu Yunshan, whom she describes as the "propaganda tsar from Inner Mongolia ... [and] the head of the CCP's propaganda department for the entire tenure of Hu Jintao and



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Wen Jiabao's ten-year reign."

On December 25, 2008, while the Christian world was celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ — the Way, the Truth, and the Light, the Prince of Peace — Liu Yanshun was addressing a forum of the heads of the CCP's national-level propaganda and cultural units, the commissars of lies, deceit, and oppression. In this speech, Liu Yunshan ordered the propaganda chiefs to "steadily push forward the construction of the socialist core value system, to better pull together spirit and qi, and to strengthen the foundations and roots." "The socialist core value system," he said, "is the essential embodiment of the socialist ideology and is the pillar of the contemporary Chinese people." Liu Yanshun's speech was a clear signal, says Gao Yu, that the Propaganda Department would be clamping down on Chinese journalists and media vehicles that were deemed guilty of exhibiting "universal values" and other pernicious Western concepts that challenge the supreme wisdom and authority of the Communist Party.

According to Gao Yu, who was a reporter for China News Service, this year's national conference of propaganda chiefs, held in January, marks an ideological turning point from Hu's time to Xi's. Liu Yanshun's speech in January to this gathering was not published until April, but the main contents of the conference had by that time already been leaked. Gao Yu says that, according to the leaked sources, the propaganda summit ordered the attendees to assure that their underlings:

1. Uphold the mouthpiece theory [i. e. the media must be the mouthpiece of the Party];
2. Uphold Marxism, Leninism, Mao Zedong thought, and the theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics as guiding principles;
3. From now on, no anti-Marxism, anti-Leninism or anti-Mao Zedong thought are allowed to appear in media. The propaganda system will cleanse itself of "new three antis" personnel, or those who are anti-party, anti-state and anti-nationality[ 1]. These people will be removed if they don't change their stand;
4. Strengthen the management of the media. Media practitioners must have clear-cut political stands, must have clear political brain, must uphold the principle of objectivity and truthfulness, and must be responsible to the society. Media cannot report negative news everyday all over their pages while ignoring the positive things; and
5. Strengthen the party's leadership over the media. This has to start from the education of media practitioners, and those with "new three anti" tendencies are not allowed to teach journalism in universities.

## **Propaganda is the "Life Blood" of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)**

For Liu Yanshun and China's Orwellian "Ministry of Truth" that upholds the CCP party line, "propaganda" does not have the negative connotations it does to those who believe in freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

Dr. Anne-Marie Brady, professor of political science at the University of Canterbury in New Zealand and the author of *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China* (2008), says that the CCP considers propaganda to be the "life blood" of the Party State.

In 2009, she testified before the U.S.-China Economic & Security Review Commission's hearings on "China's Propaganda and Perception Management Efforts, Its Intelligence Activities that Target the United States, and the Resulting Impacts on U.S. National Security." [Professor Brady told the Commission:](#)



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The Chinese government puts a high value on propaganda work, describing it as the life blood (shengmingxian) of the Party/State in the current era. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has historically divided propaganda work into two categories: internal (duinei) and external (duiwai), meaning that which is directed toward Chinese people and that which is directed toward foreigners in China, Overseas Chinese, and the outside world in general. CCP propaganda specialists also divide propaganda into four types: political, economic, cultural, and social. Relevant offices within the Chinese Party/State administration take over responsibility for propaganda work related to their area of expertise.

### **U.S. Government Adopting CCP's Propaganda and Censorship Ways**

Over the past several years, as the CCP's Propaganda Department began tightening its iron grip on internal propaganda (duinei), it also simultaneously dramatically expanded its external propaganda (duiwai), opening new offices of Central China TV (CCTV), Xinhua News, *China Daily*, and other propaganda organs, in the United States and throughout the world. It is now positioned to carry out its external (duiwai) brainwashing, which it refers to as "cultural soft power," globally, on an unprecedented scale.

As we have [noted previously](#), in January 2011, the international press freedom organization Reporters Without Borders [reported](#) that "China's propaganda department of the Communist Party runs a new six-month campaign to educate journalists to censor [themselves]."

"Chinese journalists are to undergo six-month training courses that will teach them how to 'eradicate false news, improve the feeling of social responsibility and reinforce journalistic ethics,'" Reporters Without Borders commented. "In short, to make journalists themselves actors in censorship."

Seven months later, in July 2011, scores of China's CCP propagandists masquerading as journalists descended on Salt Lake City, Utah, to report (both for internal and external propaganda purposes) on the supposedly glorious new breakthrough in relations between the National Governors Association (NGA) and China's provincial governors. The National Governors Association Annual Meeting in Salt Lake featured the first-ever U.S.-China Governors Forum, which also included representatives from China's huge corporations, which are state-owned enterprises ruled by the CCP. With many U.S. governors hoping to strike deals that would lure investment from the PRC to their states, the NGA was not about to allow such trifles as First Amendment guarantees of freedom of the press to interfere. In May, a couple of months before the NGA conference, *The New American* published a cover story by this reporter entitled ["China: The New Investment Savior?"](#), which challenged the wisdom of the all-out push by many state and local officials to whore after China's vaunted hordes of cash.

Simply criticizing the NGA's program was enough for the NGA's propaganda department to negate the First Amendment and deny *The New American* accreditation for the NGA conference. Taking a page from Liu Yanshun's handbook, the NGA's censors justified their action by claiming that *The New American* did not meet their criteria of being an "objective" and unbiased media source. However, they were unable to answer how it was that the NGA had no problem with approving accreditation for the 100+ Chinese "journalists," all of whom are licensed and trained by the CCP's Propaganda Department and all of whom work for disinformation organs overseen by the Propaganda Department. *The New American* news crew did not allow the NGA's adoption of CCP tactics to deter our efforts to report on the conference and the important issues involved in the U.S.-China Governors Forum. We were not arrested, molested, condemned, or tortured, which can be the fate of journalists who dissent from the Party Line in China, but our country is traveling rapidly down the road that leads to such an end. Below



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are articles and video commentaries and interviews we posted from Salt Lake City.

*Related articles:*

[U.S-China Governors Forum: Not All Sweetness & Harmony](#)

[National Governors Conference: China Sellout Begins With First Amendment](#)

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