

CHINESE POLITICAL REFORM AND THE DELIBERATIVE TURN

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The issue of political reform¹ is a victim of two popular misconceptions. The first is the assumption that there is none, and the second is that political reform approximates Western democracy. These two misunderstandings are linked in the sense that if reform is equated with Western democracy it is easy to infer that there is none. But even that would be incorrect. Political reform in China is alive and continues to be pursued, but it is understood quite differently and certainly cannot be equated with "bourgeois democracy." To the ruling Communist Party, although political reform has long been deemed subsidiary to economic reform, it has always been considered an important part of the reform effort and has been growing increasingly important in the post-millennial era. But political reform is differently defined than in the West. First, political reform is an instrumental, not a consummatory value--a means not an end--a functional constituent of larger process of socialist modernization. This means that reform plays a more modest role than committed democrats might prefer; and that it is a somewhat elastic concept, changing form to fit other more vital exigencies of the reform package. Second, political reform has become known is a form of change that is non-violent, almost even non-confrontational. This is justified partly by the imperative never to disrupt GDP growth and economic "stability," but it is also a reaction to the more tumultuous decades that preceded the reform era. In this earlier era there were two forms of political democratization, one that took the violent populist form of mass movements mobilized to

engage in “class struggle” in pursuit of utopian quests, the other the more sedate and incremental form of path-dependent institution-building. The former approach was largely discredited by the climactic excesses of the Cultural Revolution. Third, it follows from these two conditions that even in an era of “crossing the river by feeling for stones,” political reform is the most cautious and easily reversed or diverted form of reform, making exceptional demands on political forbearance.²

The turn to deliberative authoritarianism seems to represent a culmination of this trend, away from demonstrative, all-or-nothing, verbally and sometimes physically violent quests for transcendental objectives in favor of harmonious, consensual cooperation. It is “democratic” in seeking to expand the boundaries of political participation but conditional upon acceptance of these explicit and implicit procedural constraints.³ Similar to the panel polling exercises increasingly used by American electoral candidates to test-market new campaign themes and slogans, there is evidence of the efficacy of “deliberative polling” in enhancing public acceptance of new policies while marginally adjusting the latter to fit the public mood.⁴ It is true that the deliberative process sometimes spins out of control in the form of spontaneous local protest movements, but although such adversarial forms of mass participation fit into the Western paradigm of mass politics and thus attract international media attention, as a break from this carefully bounded sphere of legitimate discourse they risk incurring severe sanctions if they become violent or destructive.⁵ Public opinion seems to be tenuously balanced between acceptance of the official sanctification of the value of “unity and stability” and “socialist harmony” on the one hand and a growing indignation about official misconduct that tolerates the resort to innovative, sometimes extreme

expressions of outrage on the other.⁶ Meanwhile there is evidence that the realm of permissible deliberation has been gradually expanding, as participants cautiously experiment with new forms of constructive intervention without meeting authoritative objection.

Unlike revolutionary democracy with its frame-smashing iconoclasm, deliberative socialism tends to be more securely embedded in established institutional structures. This essay focuses on the legislative arena, which has been designated by the CCP leadership as the proper institutional forum to contain and productively utilize China's growing popular political effervescence. As such, this is an arena of great but until quite recently largely untapped potential.

The People's Congress System

The people's congress system was created with the enactment of the first constitution of the People's Republic in 1954. There are people's congresses at the level of provinces, cities, counties, urban districts, and townships. Throughout China, more than 3.2 million delegates to people's congresses, which range in membership size from 20 at the lowest levels to 3,000 at the National People's Congress. In constitutional theory, power flows upward; in reality the opposite is true.⁷ The District People's Congresses (DPCs) are the lowest elected level of constitutional government in urban areas. The 1982 constitution enhanced the DPCs power considerably, involving them more in local issues. In a 1987 survey evaluating the role of local congresses, 61 percent of the respondents stated that their local congress played a "very important role" or a "fair-to-average role" in their lives, and 39 percent reported that local PCs would play a great role in China's democratization.⁸ This surpassed the scores of the Communist Party,

the government, and administrative institutions. Residents increasingly viewed their DPC representative as someone to turn to if they have been treated unfairly by government officials.⁹ This can also be seen in the dramatic rise in letters received by the DPC's "complaints offices," a clear indication of a growing sense of "rights consciousness" among the Chinese citizenry.¹⁰

Constitutionally, district political congresses have four main responsibilities. First, DPC delegates elect the standing committee of the district people's congress. Second, they oversee the activities of the district people's government, the standing committee, individual DPC members, judges, procurators, and mayors. Third, the congresses ensure that the district people's government follows and implements existing laws and regulations. And finally, they approve regulations—including the budget—proposed by the district people's government. The most elastic and hence politically significant of these responsibilities are the second and third. Unlike the provincial congresses, the NPC, and higher-level congresses, DPCs do not have the legal authority to initiate legislation.¹¹

DPC members have in the course of reform become increasingly involved in the policy-making process. . To some extent this accords with the central leadership's need for a check on local governments, which have been gaining increased autonomy. By giving more authority to the people's congresses, the central government may be able to ensure its policies are being carried out and reduce corruption. But the DPCs are also asserting their own constitutional prerogatives—some have even rejected proposals by district people's governments or suspended proposed regulations. To cite one example, a DPC member in Shandong province who was not satisfied with the local education policy

suggested reforms that were later accepted by the district government.¹² In February 2001, the Shenyang Municipal People's Congress set off a small political earthquake by vetoing the annual work report of the Intermediate People's Court, mandating comprehensive reforms for the next six months.¹³ Although by constitutional role-definition the DPC should not represent local constituents but rather the people of China, members typically over time become increasingly sensitive to constituent interests.¹⁴ The rise of increasingly assertive non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has redounded in their increasing informal access to the policy-making process. A disabled-rights group in Jinan, for example, hired a law professor to write a charter to protect their rights. The professor submitted the draft regulation to the Jinan City People's Congress, which later approved it.¹⁵ Local interests have also inserted themselves into the DPC membership-selection process. Thus the meetings that led to the selection of DPC members to represent the Shandong University *danwei* were dominated by calls for more representation and decentralized policy-making, and the elected representatives were instructed to forward these views to the congress.¹⁶ Further, more and more constituency tries to apply their right to recall improper DPC deputies. For example, in 2003, 33 constituents submitted a request to depose a DPC member for her ignorance on their interest in Shenzun. Though their proposal was failed, this event evokes many followers and discussion afterwards.¹⁷ This type of involvement has become more and more common. It has enabled the local peoples congress gradually and informally to expand its jurisdiction beyond its constitutionally delineated authority.

Yet the local peoples' congresses are extremely weak, whether compared vertically with peoples' congresses at the provincial or central levels or horizontally with

local peoples' governments or Party committees. They are internally weak because of their authority structure, which accords decisive power to the internal leadership, the chairman's group. The chairman's group is the cabinet and executive of the DPC, which by preemptively discussing policy options and setting the agenda for meetings of the DPC standing committee predetermines the legislative outcome. The head of the chairman's group also chairs both the DPC and its standing committee. Notwithstanding the courageous exceptions noted above, the overwhelming majority of leadership proposals are routinely approved. Second, recruitment to membership in the DPC is carefully monitored by Party authorities to preclude inclusion of potential dissidents. DPC members are elected either by their local danwei or electoral district (and electoral arrangements may vary somewhat depending on local circumstances), but because of the official prohibition on election campaigning about half the candidates are typically selected because of name recognition (athletes, entrepreneurs) and may have no interest in local politics. Although DPC members are directly elected, and since the introduction of *cha'e* elections may face competition, all candidates are first vetted by the Communist Party. Third, local congresses are hampered by inadequate administrative support: they typically meet only three days per year, receive no salaries or research funding, have no permanent administrative staff to investigate the proposals submitted to them, and with no control of the local revenues are fiscally dependent on their superiors. Finally, the DPC is beholden to the local CCP (to which most members belong), which nominates the chairman's group and prescribes the legislative agenda. Like other state and social organizations, local legislatures must abide by the "request and report system" (*qingshi*

huibao zhidu). Lack of an enforcement mechanism implies that the local government may ignore DPC directives at will.¹⁸

The Central Legislative Arena

Once dismissed as an elaborate example of political pageantry, a “flower pot” or “rubber stamp” (*xiangpi tuzhang*) in both Western and Chinese media, the National People’s Congress (NPC) and the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) have become more powerful since the advent of reform. The NPC and CPPCC, commonly referred to as *Lianghui*, now convene each spring to discuss issues and policies of national significance. The CPPCC is the oldest but weakest of these forums, first established in 1946 in negotiations between the CCP and the Kuomintang during the second United Front to form a government for a united China. When the United Front disintegrated and the CCP gained control of the Chinese mainland in 1949, it invited delegates from various allied parties to discuss establishment of a new state, thereby convening the first session of the CPPCC. The session adopted a “Common Program” as a temporary constitution, proclaimed the founding of the PRC, elected a council of the central people’s government, and elected the first CPPCC National Congress. The CPPCC ceased to exercise supreme political authority in 1954 when the NPC was established, but as it included delegates from the eight bourgeois democratic parties representing China’s middle classes as well as the CCP (and a few non-party notables), it was permitted to remain in existence.¹⁹ The CPPCC has a national committee, which has a five-year term, holds sessions each year, and serves as China’s highest political and legislative advisory body; the CPPCC also has local committees, similarly organized. The list of nominated delegates (the 11th National Committee in 2009 had 2,237, nearly

the same number as the NPC) is first submitted by central and local branch parties and social organizations to the CCP Central Committee, who then submit a final candidate list to the CPPCC Standing Committee for final approval. The CPPCC thus still functions, chaired by a member of the CCP Politburo Standing Committee, as an increasingly active forum for discussion and policy suggestions. At the March 2000 session there were calls for private entrepreneurs to be represented, for example. Thus by the 10th CPPCC (March 2003) there were 65 delegates (of 2,238 total) representing the “non-state” sector. As a United Front organ the CPPCC has been more receptive to the recruitment of middle-class entrepreneurs and professionals than the NPC. At its 11th National Committee conference in 2009 CPPCC members submitted 5,430 non-legal “proposals.” As a purely deliberative institution without legislative or executive power, proposals from the CPPCC have some impact, but are generally limited to technical issues, social problems, and environmental matters.²⁰

Though no longer a “rubber stamp,” the NPC is in a constitutionally ambiguous position. On the one hand it is the highest organ of state power in a unitary government without separation of powers in which all other government organs, including the judicial system and procurator and all subordinate people’s congresses (excepting only the presidency) are subordinate to it. On the other hand the state is under the leadership of the CCP, which nominates its leadership (though other parties can in theory also nominate candidates for leadership and the NPC can in theory reject CCP nominations) and submits most of the legislative proposals for it to consider (though the NPC, unlike local people’s congresses, also has the right to initiate legislation--as does its standing committee).²¹ The CCP is not in but above the government; although other parties and

social groups are also included in the NPC they do not constitute a partisan “opposition” but are expected to cooperate. Each NPC must submit its five-year legislative program to the CCP Central Committee for approval. Legislative drafts concerned with political sphere and with critical economic and administrative issues should also be reviewed by CCP firstly.²² According to some Chinese critics, the CCP has sometimes exceeded its constitutionally mandated “leading role” by in effect displacing the government and acting in its place, as for example during the Cultural Revolution. This proclivity was corrected at the 13th Party Congress in 1987 under the slogan of “separation of Party and State” (*dang-zheng fenkai*), though there has been a certain relapse to an overarching CCP leadership since 1989 (as in the return to “multiple hats,” the revitalization of nomenclatura, and evisceration of the independent civil service). Nevertheless, a more clear division of labor has emerged as the Party now sees its role as acting through but not in place of the government.²³ And though it has very rarely vetoed Party proposals, the NPC has exerted its independent will without defying the leadership role of the Party in two ways: (1) in the growing number of minority abstentions or (since 1988) negative votes to Party proposals or candidacies, and (2) in the use of legislative “viscosity” to delay the Party’s legislative agenda for quite long periods.²⁴ Thus passage of the Labor Contract Law in 2008 aroused debates among delegates regarding its enactment and implementation extending well into 2009. Property Law had been amended for seven times in NPC standing committee before it was enacted into law.

The NPC has the power to legislate both the constitution and other national laws and to appoint or dismiss all state leaders. One of its proudest achievements has been the resuscitation of its legislative power to enact a relatively complete legal code, including

provision for village elections, the insertion of more choice into elections at various levels via the *cha'e* system (delegates to the NPC itself are not so elected, though elections of its standing committee have a 5 percent elimination list). The NPC now meets more frequently and much more regularly and for a somewhat longer period of time than during the period of “continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat.” The NPC and its standing committee must be responsible to make decisions and review numerous legislative proposals nowadays.²⁵ There are now nine specialized committees of 235 members within the NPC with their own permanent staffs to investigate their respective areas of competence as well as a standing committee of 175 members that meets on a bi-monthly basis (since 1987) while the NPC is not in session with plenipotentiary power to amend and enact laws and conduct its own investigations. Although the power of the NPC is currently on the rise, it has had a troubled history. The deliberative path it represents coexisted for three decades with the revolutionary romantic path adumbrated above but only uneasily, for when the latter held sway the former went into eclipse. Since the anti-right movement in 1957 NPC and its standing committee did not convene regularly and scrutinize less legislative proposals. During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution between 1966 and 1975 not a single piece of legislation was passed.²⁶ In 1968 the Organization Department of the CCP Central Committee declared that 52 percent of the 3rd NPC Standing Committee members had serious “political problems,” and the staff office of the NPC was expelled from the Great Hall of the People and placed under military control. Only when the reform policy began in 1978 was the NPC restored, as a representative of institutionalized democracy. Deng Xiaoping was personally strongly in favor of this, recommending the people’s congresses

as forums where the opinions of the masses should receive full expression in the debates, that the Party itself should subject itself to NPC oversight. NPC deputies now make organized inspections of the work of the government, the judiciary and other bodies once or twice per year. In the first decade of reform, the heyday of “emancipation of the mind” and other democratic ideals, quite radical proposals were articulated to enable China’s legislative institutions to reach their fullest potential, such as introducing a bicameral legislature with the NPC as the lower house and the CPPCC as the upper house, or direct election of NPC deputies, or substantially longer NPC sessions, or a 50 percent margin of elimination in elections, or somewhat more informative electoral campaigns, but none of these proposals has yet gained approval.

As a potential forum for deliberative authoritarianism the NPC is more powerful and prestigious than subordinate people’s congresses but remains subordinate to the Party and only nominally superior to the State Council that heads its executive branch, and it is more distant from the practical affairs of the people than local people’s congresses. First, the NPC has greatly expanded and systematized its capacity to receive and give due consideration to people’s letters of grievance and suggestions and personal visits . In the General Office of the NPC standing committee there is a department (Xinfang Shi) to deal with letters and visitor complaints, which must categorize these and file a report to standing committee leaders and to leaders of the CCP Central Committee. In 2006 the department received about 227 thousand complaint letters.²⁷ The advent of the computer and mobile phone has had a profound impact on the volume of such complaints: thus one restaurant owner and NPC delegate, who suggested at the March 2010 annual session shutting down all private internet cafes, precipitated such a furor that indignant hackers

eventually crashed her company website. Second, prior to adoption of a constitution or other major legislation the NPC has reinstated public discussion prior to legislative action; in fact, the landmark Law on Legislature of 2000 mandated public hearings prior to passing any legal regulation or law. Zhao Linzhong, an entrepreneur and erstwhile NPC delegate from Zhejiang, said he compiled 122 proposals in 2004 based on thousands of letters he received after soliciting advice through various local media.²⁸ The NPC's response to such complaints has been most courteous but less than impressive in terms of practical remediation.²⁹

Conclusions

According to this brief and superficial investigation, there is no unified, overarching vision of political reform. It is not on the Marxist conceptual "map" of feudalism, capitalism, socialism and so forth. It is clearly distinct from Western democratization, though the Chinese process of political reform shares some aspects of those ideals. Political reform is essentially an occasionally useful, even necessary, adjunct to economic reform, which it is meant to facilitate, but at the same time it is conceived to be more radical and fundamental than economic reform, a drastic and more risky solution for systemic problems to be resorted to only in particularly urgent circumstances. This is because it involves restructuring of the basic institutions of the Party-state, whose survival is deemed systemically indispensable, in a process meant to be transitive and nonrecursive.

Political reform in China is ongoing, though it has certainly become more cautious since the reforms of the 1980s. This is partly because political reform is inherently more ambitious and unsettling than economic reform, partly because any

adjustments may disturb the framework in which the reformers themselves have a vested interest as their source of livelihood. Though different political reforms are pursued in different arenas at different times, they seem to be informed by the same broad vision at any given period. This may be a consequence of monocratic national leadership, or it may reflect elite consensus in response to a given political-economic situation. But there are also contradictions within periods--the simultaneous pursuit of price reform and intellectual blooming in 1988 was not contradictory but mutually reinforcing social chaos; the pursuit of privatization and SOE reform in the late 1990s led to a conflict of interest among executives and cadre corruption, the main beneficiaries of reform tend to oppose its extension. On the whole, Chinese political reformers have been flexible and appropriately responsive to economic exigencies, and can share credit for a quarter century of one of the fastest GDP growth rates in the world.

The role of deliberation in political reform has direct ancestry to the “mass line” of the Maoist era, the notion of “from the masses, to the masses,” in which given the proper official receptiveness, bright new ideas would percolate up from the grassroots, be circulated among the elite and refined and then implemented on a national (or local) scale. Its revival in less tumultuous form in the reform era is thus plausibly comfortable to Party ideologues as well as democrats. Deliberation is also ambiguous and plastic enough to be manipulated by the leadership to push its own priorities under the cloak of public approval. And thus far the results have usually been fairly modest adjustments of elite proposals rather than radical, sweeping or tenure-threatening new ideas. The leadership’s endorsement of this form of democracy may be seen from this perspective as very cautious. Yet once the door has been opened to public deliberation, even under the

narrow procedural constraints the leadership has instituted, the potential for more profound political change can walk through it.

Perhaps it is in the light of this potential populist risk that the tightening of political constraints on electronic and conventional print media of the past few years may be understood. If Chinese public opinion can be sealed off from any penetration of potentially polluting foreign ideas, the possibility of disequilibrating outside ideas can be reduced and the risk of opening the public sphere to deliberation correspondingly mitigated. Yet public deliberation has its own intrinsic dynamic, as deliberation itself precipitates an active quest for new ideas and information that works against any such attempt to insulate the public sphere.

NOTES

¹Cf. Benedict Stavis, China's Political Reforms: An Interim Report (New York: Praeger, 1988), and Barrett McCormick, Political Reform in Post-Mao China: Democracy and Bureaucracy in a Leninist State (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

² Yongnian Zheng named the reform as 'political incrementalism' and Szu-chien Hsu labeled Chinese reform pace as "political minimalism". See Zheng, "Political Incrementalism: Political Lessons from China's 20 Years of Reform," Third World Quarterly, vol.20, no.6 (December 1999), pp. 1157-1177. Szu-chien Hsu, "Zhongguo Dalu Jiushi Niandai zhi Zhengzhi Gaige yu Zhidu bianqian," [Political Reform and Institutional Transition in Mainland China in the 1990s] Zhongguo Dalu Yanjiu [Journal of Mainland China Studies], vol.44, no.2 (February 2001) pp. 1-29.

³ Chih-Chung Chang, Zhonggong Dangguo Bianjie de Sheding yu Yanshen: Lishi zhidulun de Guandian [Boundary Setting and Boundary Spanning of China's Party-State: A Historical Institutional View] (Taipei: Weber Publication International Ltd. 2008).

⁴ Cf. Baogang He and Mark E. Warren, "Authoritarian Deliberation: The Deliberative Turn in Chinese Political Development," Conference Paper, May 2010; and James S. Fishkin, Baogang He, Robert C. Luskin and Alice Siu, "Notes and Comments: Deliberative Democracy in an Unlikely Place: Deliberative Polling in China," British Journal of Political Science, 2010, pp. 1-14.

⁵ Although the authoritative response is not entirely predictable, over time the threshold of permissible demonstrations has been raised: while peaceful Tiananmen protests incurred notoriously violent suppression in June 1989, in 2007 in Xiamen residents organized a demonstration via online text messages against the construction of a massive

chemical plant in the area; this demonstration was not only not suppressed but resulted in the project being moved elsewhere, because of the peaceful nature of the protest and the fact that citizens were voicing their rights according to the law. New China, no. 120 (April 5, 2010), p. 19.

⁶ Examples of official corruption, which Zeng Qinghong labeled the “main fuse inciting conflict between officials and the masses,” include the 470 million yuan (\$56 million) embezzled by officials in the Three Gorges Dam human-relocation project and a massive smuggling scandal in Xiamen, Fujian province—reportedly the biggest in the history of the People’s Republic, with more than 200 medium- and high-level officials implicated in a \$6 billion smuggling scheme.

⁷ James Derleth and Daniel R. Koldyk, “Reforming the Chinese State: The District People’s Congresses and Political Reform in China,” Problems of Post-Communism, vol. 49, no. 2, March/April 2002, pp. 15–22.

⁸ Cai Dingjian, “Crisis and Change: Law in the Period of Transformation,” in Zhengzhi Zhongguo [Political China], ed. Dong Yuyu and Shi Binghai (Beijing: China Today Press, 1998), p. 94.

⁹ Murray Scot Tanner, The Politics of Lawmaking in Post-Mao China: Institutions, Processes, and Democratic Prospects (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 121-122.

¹⁰ See Ming Xia, “Informational Efficiency, Organizational Development and the Institutional Linkages of the Provincial People’s Congresses in China,” Journal of Legislative Studies 3, no. 3 (autumn 1997), pp. 18–22.

¹¹ “Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Difang Geji Renmin Daibiao Dahui he Difang Geji Renmin Zhengfu Zuzhi Fa” (Organic Law of the Local People’s Congresses and Local People’s Government of the People’s Republic of China), 2004/10/27, <http://news.xinhuanet.com/zhengfu/2004-10/28/content_2147270.htm> (July 25, 2010).

¹² Renmin ribao (March 6, 1998): 1.

¹³ This was done although before and after the plenum, the Shenyang CCP branch passed a resolution enjoining all Party members to “select candidates whom the Party recommended and approve annual work reports of state organs which the Party has considered in advance.” Young Nam Cho, Local People’s Congresses in China: Development and Transition (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 1.

¹⁴, Cho, Local People’s, p. 101.

¹⁵ Derleth and Koldyk, “Reforming,” fn. 33.

¹⁶ Derleth & Koldyk, “Reforming,” fn. 34.

¹⁷ Tang, Shanshan, “Xuanju Bamian Zhidu Gaige de Fenxi,” [An Analysis on Reform of Election and Deposition], China Elections and Governance, 2006/6/20, <<http://www.chinaelections.org/newsinfo.asp?newsid=91228>> (July 25, 2010).

¹⁸ Cho, Local People’s, pp. 170-172; Derleth & Koldyk, “Reforming,” passim.

¹⁹ Chen, Wei, Zhengdang Yu Lifa Wenti Yanjiu: Jiejian Yu Chaoyue (Studies on Political Parties and Legislation: Old Practice and New Challenges) (Beijing: Remin Chuban She, 2008), pp. 333-335.

²⁰ Tony Saich, Governance & Politics of China (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, 2nd ed.), p. 126. Nevertheless, it is permitted that members of eight democratic parties can be recruited into legislative process as NPC representatives.

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- ²¹ Chen, Wei, Zhengdang Yu Lifa Wenti Yanjiu: Jiejian Yu Chaoyue (Studies on Political Parties and Legislation: Old Practice and New Challenges). (Beijing: Remin Chuban She, 2008), pp.235-283.
- ²² Cai, Dingjian, Zhongguo Renmin Daibiao Dahui Zhidu (The Institution of the Chinese People's Congress). (Beijing: Falu Chuban She, 2003), p. 33.
- ²³ Jiang Jinsong, The National People's Congress of China (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2003), pp. 118-119.
- ²⁴ On April 29, 1999, in the only recorded instance on record, the 9th NPC standing committee shocked its leadership (and perhaps itself) by rejecting a law bill introduced and warmly endorsed by the State Council under Zhu Rongji. Concerned that the highway amendment bill's surcharge on fuel would infuriate farmers, were critical of the bill. The vote was 77 in favor, 6 opposed, 42 abstentions, and 2 not pressing the key of the voting machine. Since the standing committee membership was 154 the measure required 78 votes to pass, and it failed for lack of one vote. The bill was passed in the 12th session, in October 1999. Jiang, The National, p. 204, 208.
- ²⁵ Zhou, Wei. "Quanguo Renda Changweihui de Huiqi yu Yicheng Yanjiu," (A Study on Session and Agenda of NPC Standing Committees) Tsinghua Law Review, vol. 2, no. 5 (2008), pp. 109-118.
- ²⁶ Cai, Dingjian, Zhongguo Renmin Daibiao Dahui Zhidu (The Institution of the Chinese People's Congress). (Beijing: Falu Chuban She, 2003), pp. 61-70.
- ²⁷ "Qianfang Baiji Tuidong 'Shiyao Jiejue' : Liu Zhenwei Fu Mishu Zhang Tan Quanguo Renda Changweihui Jiguan Xinfang Gongzuo," (A Interview with Liu Zhenwei) Zhongguo Renda 3 (February 2007), pp. 8-11.

²⁸ Yu Xiaodong, “Going Public,” News China, no. 21 (April 5, 2010).

²⁹ Jiang, National, pp. 401 ff.