

Chapter 5

Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

The transition from a socialist planned economy and a centralized political structure to a hybrid 'socialist-market' economy and decentralized, or fragmented, political structure, has created unprecedented economic growth in China. The economic reforms also have divided the country in rich and poor, developed and backward, state planned economy and market competition, etc. Political corruption is one of many side-effects that have emerged as pressing threats to the continued reforms and the survival of both the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese state apparatus. In this final chapter, the study will include a summary of factors that impedes efforts to combat corruption in China, the policy recommendation for implementation and a conclusion.

5.2 Factors Impede Anti-corruption campaigns in China

The definition of corruption in China

How the Chinese leadership defines political corruption affects its design of anti-corruption policies. The moralist-normative perspective on corruption has long been in the Chinese political tradition. The tools used by the Chinese leadership for fighting corruption are predominantly moralist: propaganda, anti-corruption campaigns, 'spiritual' civilization campaigns, etc. The normative effect is achieved by emphasizing the educational value of

highlighting cases. With the development of legal institutions and the Criminal Law in the early 1980s, the CCP has increasingly turned to utilizing a legalist perspective on corruption, defining it simply as economic crimes. In the rapid transformation process boundaries between socialist morality and capitalist profit making were soon blurred. The bureaucratic administrations, the law, and the officials, have all lagged behind the economic reform policies. Reformers adopted a very functionalist view on the problem of political corruption and considered corruption as an inevitable part of the economic reforms (Gong 1993). There are differences in the CCP leadership, on the definition of political corruption. In theory, the moralist-normative and the legalist perspectives have dominated the official discourse on the definition of political corruption. In practice the Chinese leadership has been very lenient in treating abuses of position in the Party and government administrations.

Efforts to Combat Corruption

Anti-corruption campaigns, anti-crime campaigns, and 'spiritual civilization' campaigns, have a moralist-normative purpose and are intended to increase the pressure through the use of propaganda and the exposure of a number of cases. In fact the CCP leadership has shown much more leniency and indecisiveness employing these methods to bring the corruption problem under control. Apparently, the CCP is not ready to subject its own supreme rule to the rule of law, and there is a pronounced unwillingness to let the law take precedence over politics. The unconditional rule of the CCP is nothing new to China. The CCP leadership tries to avoid creating that an image of *all* officials having become money-oriented and interest-maximizers, and blames the problem on the lack of moral commitment and 'spiritual pollution.'

Even though the goals of anti-corruption work can be lofty and many officials are tried and sentenced by the CDIC or criminal courts, the purpose and role of anti-corruption work in Chinese politics vary with time and place. The issue of political corruption is able to aggravate and mobilize powerful public opinion as it is a very sensitive political issue. The 1989 Tian Anmen student protesters accused the Party and the government collectively of declining moral and perversion of norms. In the 1990s, this has affected the way the leadership tries to alleviate the problem, e.g. its choice of grandiose style ad hoc campaigns to satisfy the public demand for action. The fortunes of the present regime are still closely intertwined with the success or failure of bringing about a better socio-economic welfare to the people and of being able to satisfy the bureaucratic elite that has lost some of its political and economical power to private entrepreneurs. Apart from being crowd pleasers, anti-corruption campaigns also serve a purpose in that they reach every corner of society, and can have at least a temporary effect on public opinion and raising the risk of being corrupt. Anti-corruption campaigns are at least partly the result of the regime having to resort to a public interest sensitive to performance-based legitimacy instead of relying on an institutionalized legal-rational system.

Anti-corruption at the policy-making level

At the policy-making level, the Chinese leadership faces a tall order to enforce the rules and regulations of a competitive market economy. A vital part of this transition is to transform Party and government organizations into public service institutions. To combat political

corruption, the CDIC ensures that all Party officials abide by the law and the Party discipline. The CDIC and all judicial authorities, however, are themselves subject to Party control, and the party committees at every level guide and lead their work. The tasks of the CDIC and the Ministry of Supervision have gradually become more focused on economic crimes within the Party and government bureaucracies. The reforms have affected all aspects of China's political life. To uphold a state of political and social stability, and continue the economic reforms, the CCP leadership has intentionally formulated the anti-corruption efforts.

The change of legitimacy and modes of legitimation, has made the CCP leadership very dependent on the continued success of the economic reforms in creating growth and social welfare development. The relatively lenient treatment of both Zhou Beifang and Chen Xitong are two good examples of some of the problems that the Bei Jing centre is confronted with when designing and executing its anti-corruption policies. These two cases illustrate three points:

1. The Party has in spite of numerous statements to the contrary large problems with pursuing and punishing high level leaders with very intricate contacts in the highest political hierarchy;
2. The criminal pursuit of Politburo member and provincial level leader Chen, would frighten all high level leaders and seriously damage relations between the central and provincial and local Party committees and leaders;
3. The political game in the CCP leadership have an influence on the investigations and sentencing of high level leaders as these leaders often belong to powerful families, cliques, or factions of the Party.

The implementation level

Decentralization has changed the distribution of official power, and delegated some controls to lower-level bureaucracies. This has made the localities stronger in voicing their demands on the centre, and more capable of resisting central policies. The fragmentation of the larger political structure has not led to fragmentation of local governments and institutions, but has instead increased the power of local Party committees to decide on almost anything within their jurisdiction. The pressure from the central government on the localities varies from case to case. Anti-corruption policies are much more politically sensitive, and since the pecuniary policies themselves are part of the battle between the centre and the localities for economic supremacy, the burden of implementation largely falls on the local Party committee.

Local officials are part of a community where they have to rule effectively and not resort to excessive repression and abuses of power. The economic reforms have brought with them increased patron-client ties between local officials and the citizens. The corruption in local governments and institutions is not only a case of abuse of position for personal gain. Local officials are also part of extensive *guanxi* networks both within and outside the local community. This network to a limit decides who gets what in terms of allocation of funds, contracts, licenses, and how the Party committee sentences a corrupt official. The informal networks can also function to provide emerging powerful economic and other intermediary groups with access to political power which is almost a necessity for the political development in China as these increasingly important economic power holders lack political capacity and ability through the normal channels.

5.3 Policy recommendation for implementation

The cracked down on China officials' corruption movements should be continued and persistent. Increased efforts and scrutiny on the part of the government are needed, the areas are following:

An Independent and Well Trained judiciary.

Though after two decades of economic reforms, the legal system in China has been set up and almost completed. In some areas the laws are still unclear and hazy. The intervention right of law are still in the hands of the state and Communist Party authorities as it is still not functioning as an independent institution. Most of the judges are the members of the Communist Party and they themselves were found involved in corruption. The effective on punishment for corruption and the fairness of the law for party and government officials as well as for private citizens is still not achieved unless the reform in the legal system is therefor made. So the creation of the independent institutions that were given the authorization to investigate all level of government officials in corruption is needed.

Reform in the inner government bureaucracies

To reduce all level of official corruption one of the essential and effective steps is to reform the institutional structure that encourages corruption. Creating an awareness of among public

servants of their service to the public can be done via the following:

- Increasing their wages and social benefits;
- Having the vision of the officials;
- Stressing the ideological education and transparency in their work to the public;
- Adopting ethics and financial disclosure laws;
- Removing discretionary decisions;
- Having tour display of the severe punishment of official corruption and taking the administrative reform,

While the above can reduce the motivations of corruption, increase the efficiency of administration and reduce administrative procedures. In some places in China, starting a new business, in some cases demanding to take more than 30 permits, and then there are 30 opportunities for bribes and corruption. These demands could well be eliminated and procedures made quick and automatic.

Increased Inrsight and Public Participation in Government

Increasing both the public scrutiny and media exposure of activities of government and public officials is a kin to having a boss watch over his employees. The media can play an important role as a neutral party in reporting the news; pertaining to government officials. To establish the Non-Governmental Organizations watch and report any official abuse of power. Links with other community and independent of the judiciary will help to increase the effectiveness of the government and eliminate official corruption.

Proper Selection to Public Office

Fair and competitive campaign for any official post is another weapons against corruption. Create a fair and reasonable process for selection of candidates in which compete for the public posts, the selection procedure should be transparent and under public scrutiny. A democratic selection of the government officials can allow the public participation and willingness to choose their choice. A top to bottom form of office leadership can greatly encourage ambitious young adults to serve the country and people. With a unique complaint system to monitor government officials the people can actually become masters of the country.

5.4 Conclusion Remarks

In general, the Party leadership tries at all costs to avoid a thorough exposure of the CCP, which would seriously endanger party legitimacy and rule. If corruption in the CCP were made public, the Party would risk coming apart. To please the public, a few selected cases are exposed while anti-corruption campaigns are staged regularly to show resolve and determination combating corruption. It is obvious that the leadership under Jiang Zemin lacks the strength and capacity to thoroughly have its own way as Mao Zedong once had.

The problem of political corruption was not created by the reforms, but has been part of China's political history for thousands of years. Therefore it is necessary to treat corruption not as a static part of the economic reforms but as a dynamic undesirable effect of moral, structural, procedural, economic, and cultural deficiencies in the political, legal and bureau-

cratic systems. Political corruption flourishes in times of change, where political institutions, operating procedures, moral commitment, economic and social equality, and cultural traditions are threatened by transformation. The level of political corruption is to a large extent, directly affected by policy choices made by the CCP leadership for reform purposes, and has a direct bearing on the style and pattern of political corruption within the reform period. (Gong, 1993). Policy choices are also affected by the perception and definition of political corruption in the CCP leadership.

The Chinese Communist Party faces the arduous double task of creating continued economic growth and controlling rampant corruption, but the methods used so far have proven ineffective due to the use of anti-corruption campaigns and moral propaganda rather than an increased rule of law. The problem of political corruption is only one of many difficult tasks for the CCP leadership to resolve. This problem, however, is closely intertwined with the negative side effects of the general political development. The level of political corruption could be viewed as an indicator of the leadership's ability to continue the economic and political reforms, and creating itself a longer-ranging legitimacy, while closing the gap between the successful regions and social groups, and the poor inland regions involving millions of deprived state employees.

Corruption thrives on deficiencies in any type of political and bureaucratic structure. The choice of having a descriptive and open-ended analysis of corruption in China was partly due to a conscious decision to present a complex picture of the role of corruption in the Chinese political environment. However, due to some limitations, attempts have not been made to

present a solution to the ineffectiveness of anti-corruption campaign in China. The goal of this paper has been to present a framework with instruments with which to describe political corruption as an integral part of the Chinese political environment which can't be viewed separately from the larger structural, procedural, legal, transitional areas to which political corruption owes its existence.

When the central government decentralizes and gives power and authority to the lower level government, it loses regrettably its control on the ideology that help to reduce official corruption. Not with standing this, the government had made progress in combating corruption in the 1980's and 1990's to provide reason for optimism for the future. The Chinese government has made fighting corruption their main government agenda. The government's ability to reduce and eliminate corruption in some ways will determine China's economic development and the development of its goals of becoming an advanced and prosperous country.