

1952

Speeches/Documents

Title: Provisional act of the PRC for the organization of security defense committees (extract)

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Description: promulgated by the Ministry of Public Security, Aug. 11, 1952)

Article 1. In order to rouse the masses and to assist the people's government in preventing treason, espionage, theft, and arson, in liquidating counterrevolutionary activity, and in defending state and public security, it is specially prescribed that security defense committees be universally established throughout the country, in every city after development of the movement for the suppression of counterrevolution and in every rural village after completion of the land reform.

Article 2. Security defense committees are mass security defense organizations. They are responsible for conducting their work under the leadership of the basic level government and public security defense organs.

Article 3. When establishing security defense committees, organs, factories, enterprises, schools, and streets shall generally be taken as units in cities, while in rural villages the administrative village shall be the unit. The committees shall be composed of three to eleven members, depending on the number of persons in a unit and the complexity of its situation. There shall be one committee chairman, and there may also be one or two vice-chairmen.

After the establishment of security defense committees, in accordance with the needs of the situation and with the approval of city or county public security bureaus, security defense groups may be established. They shall be composed of three to five activists elected by the masses; and they shall each have a chief and shall conduct their work under the leadership of security defense committees.

Article 4. The election of members of security defense committees:

(1) All those who are among the people, who have clear histories and proper demeanor, who excel in linking themselves with the masses, and who are enthusiastic about security defense work may be elected committee members.

(2) When electing members of security defense committees, there shall be thorough advance preparation. A roster of candidates shall be presented by the masses, and shall be introduced, examined, and evaluated. After this [the evaluative process] is completed, the election shall be carried out. A new election shall be held every six months. Those who are re-elected may continue to serve. However, if during the term of office a majority of the masses consider it necessary, they may replace members in a regular election.

Article 5. The concrete tasks of security defense committees [shall be]:

(1) To link themselves intimately with the masses and to conduct among the masses regular propaganda-education about preventing treason, espionage, arson, and theft and suppressing counterrevolutionary activity, in order to heighten the political vigilance of the masses;

(2) To organize and to lead the masses in assisting the government and public security organs in denouncing, supervising, and controlling counterrevolutionaries, in order strictly to prevent counterrevolutionary sabotage activity;

(3) To organize and to lead the masses in assisting the government and public security organs in conducting the work of education and thought reform among members of the families of counterrevolutionaries, striving to obtain their support for policies and measures of the government;

(4) To rouse the masses collectively to adopt anti-treason patriotic pacts and also to organize the masses conscientiously to execute them, in order to preserve the security of society.

Article 6. The powers of security defense committees:

- (1) They shall be responsible for arresting and taking to the government or to public security organs current counterrevolutionaries and criminals who are fugitives; but they have no power to interrogate or to hold such criminals in custody or to handle their cases.
- (2) They shall be responsible for investigating, watching, denouncing, and reporting noncurrent counterrevolutionaries but they have no power to arrest, to take into custody, to search, or to repress them.
- (3) With respect to the security of society and the work of control, they shall be responsible for educating the masses to preserve revolutionary order and for supervising the labor and production of those under control, for not permitting them to say or do whatever they please, and for promptly reporting the state of their behavior to public security organs; but they have no power to detain, to punish, or to drive them away [from the area].
- (4) They shall assist public security personnel in maintaining order at places where counterrevolutionary sabotage has occurred and in protecting the scene of such sabotage, thereby facilitating on-the-spot investigation by public security organs; but they may not alter and deal with that scene.

Article 7. The Members of security defense committees must strictly observe all the following kinds of discipline:

- (1) Observe the laws and decrees of the government.
- (2) Keep work secrets and not divulge them.
- (3) Hold firmly to the principles of the people's revolution, not conceal counterrevolutionaries, not harbor resentment and make maliciously false accusations, and not corruptly accept bribes.
- (4) Unify and help the masses, and not coercively command them or rely on power to take advantage of them.

Article 8. The leadership relationships of security defense committees [shall be as follows]:

- (1) Security defense committees in organs, factories, enterprises, and schools shall be under the leadership of the administrative organs and public security defense departments of their respective units.
- (2) Security defense committees of city streets shall be under the leadership of public security stations. Where there are residents' committees, security defense committees shall be under the dual leadership of public security stations and residents' committees. In outlying areas where there are no public security
- (3) Security committees in hsiang in rural districts shall be under the leadership of hsiang (or ts'un) governments and public security personnel.
- (4) Security committees in villages along the coast shall be under the leadership of the coastal defence station and the public security personnel for coastal defence.

Article 9. Basic level governments and public security organs in the various places shall strengthen the leadership of the work of security defense committees and also establish necessary systems:

- (1) They shall require all security defense committees periodically to report on their work to the local masses, to invite the opinions of the masses, and to accept the criticism of the masses.
- (2) Those who are active and have conspicuous accomplishments in their work shall promptly be given commendations and rewards. Those who separate themselves from the masses and violate discipline shall promptly be given criticism and penalties. Before rewards or penalties are given they must be discussed and decided upon by the local masses and approved by the leadership organs.

Article 10. Provincial and city public security departments and bureaus may, on the basis of the spirit of this Act, formulate concrete measures for executing the Act and report them to the [authorities of] large administrative areas and to the Central Ministry of Public Security for the record.

Article 11. After approval by the Government Administration Council of the Central People's Government, this Act shall be promulgated and put into effect by the Central Ministry of Public Security.